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The *DECEMBER SMART SET* will contain a complete novel of Washington life from the inside, entitled "*Clavering and His Daughter*," by Foxcroft Davis.

One of our most conservative publishing houses, on reading the first MS. of this new author, not only accepted it, but at once ordered two more books to form a series of three on social and political life at the nation's capital. The first of these will soon appear. Meanwhile THE SMART SET has secured for December the first published work by this new writer whose masterly style and startling and thorough knowledge of Washington people—many of whom are recognized in his characters—assure him in advance a phenomenal success. The intense human interest and powerful character drawing mark this novel as a masterpiece.

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THE SURRENDER

By J. H. Twells, Jr.

THE small greenish eyes looking into hers had the semblance, to Eva's mind, of things manufactured, created of man as cleverly as were the tope-colored deer-hide skirt, tope coat and the smart little hat that topped the woman's head with a touch of genius from New York's smartest milliner. Yet there was a certain human warmth penetrating the wealth-crust of the woman, a warmth not often existent in a born-to-it social leader. There was even a suggestion of tears in the eyes, the hint of a sensibility beyond the lore of her kind.

"You are so cold!" she was saying. "You go off like this into a new world, a new life, leaving me as though you were crossing the street instead of the ocean."

Eva Blackford looked toward the crowd gathered below them on the quay near the great ship's gang-plank. She knew this woman loved her, as well as any woman is capable of loving another in the world of fashion and wealth, but the fact held no value for her. They had spent their schooldays together in an ultra-select seminary; they had been launched together upon the riotous tide of society and had both made "brilliant matches" in the modern sense. She knew she owed much to this friend, whose financial right to a high place in the realms of wealth had brought her also into more intimate relations with the *noblesse* than she could have attained alone. Eva was not beautiful, neither had her father been possessor of sufficient millions to hold a substantial place in

the world of riches. Her faultless form had carried her through the ordeal of debut, and the short-nosed, delicately modeled face had gradually acquired a charm that could not be defined by lines; yet without some money she might have been overlooked in the rush of frivolity and scandal, had it not been for the interest of this associate of her schooldays.

Eva had aimed as deliberately and unromantically as any for one millionaire, and had been unconsciously won by another. The marriage, according to public dictum, was a success; there existed but one flaw, unperceived by the social judges—she loved!

Three years of extravagance, yachting, sightseeing, ecstatic living, seasoned with some anxiety, and then—a shock, and a break of the tie she had deemed indissoluble.

When she married Bob Winstanley he had looked upon the world—each twelvemonth with keener insight—for more than thirty years; she had lived but twenty-four, and had not yet seen beyond the outer husk. Even when her illusions became dimmed by the glare of new conditions, marriage had preserved for her its sacred significance. In loving and believing herself loved, she was content. She entered merely as a matter of form the dissipation that constituted so large a proportion of the atmosphere in which her lot was set. Reality was to her too sweet to smother in drugged senses or in struggling for the unreal. She had been satisfied to stand with him she loved and watch the wild world spin about her, to add her voice

to its joyous hubbub, to applaud its struggles after amusement. In these struggles she had seen nothing vicious; the iridescent hues on the pool about which she hovered—the deep, impenetrable pool of social mysteries—were to her as the lovely coloring of a bubble to a child. Never had she dreamed of the diseased stagnation concealed in the darkness beneath, until one day the surface was roughly broken, and he whose wife she was sank, a victim to its invisible miasma.

The fact that the world about her attached little importance to an event that had shattered every dream and illusion of her life prevented her giving voice to her anguish of soul. For the first time she saw that world as it really was, and although reeling in dizzy horror on the brink of an abyss she had never suspected, she knew of no one who might understand and give her satisfactory counsel.

In the strength of that self-reliant calm given strong natures in the hour of their keenest trial, she determined alone upon the only plan which to her seemed possible. She took the initiative and gave her husband the freedom he had not so much as asked for, although he had made no attempt to conceal the true state of his feelings. The divorce had been obtained very quietly, after Winstanley had spent more than a year abroad in the wake—by his own confession—of another woman.

Eva was once more Miss Blackford, and the world she had learned to see through rosy glasses had become glaring and wide—ugly with mockery and lies. She was quiet, but she was not deceived. The walls that hemmed in the world to which she was born and bred were too high to see beyond. It was all the world she knew, and although she now scented the poison in every flower, discerned the mask on every face, and suspected venom in every tongue, she could imagine no other. That there was peace beyond the walls she knew, but it was the peace of cows and peasants—the calm of empty fields, after the splendor and

gaiety of palaces, and her nature shrank from it.

Yet the environment she was familiar with had become unbearable; this woman, so closely associated with the past, fretted her with the suggestion of an obligation she was not willing to recognize. She longed to be away from them all, to feel the great ship move, and to see the familiar outlines of New York fade into obscurity.

"You lock everything away in yourself!" continued her friend, after waiting vainly for response. "It is not wise, Eva; it will bring about a morbid state of mind."

Eva laughed softly and caught back her veil that had become loose. "I don't think I am likely to become morbid; and I really don't see the advantage of trying to unbosom myself to you, of things *I* don't understand. At any rate, you may be sure I sha'n't commit suicide on the voyage, with three cases of champagne at my disposal! Imagine! What am I to do with it? Bathe in it, or—heavens above! here come Jack Atley and his wife, and Beverley, and—what am I to do? I do so hate this farewell business!"

"Just one word, Eva, before they come," said the other woman hurriedly. "I—I hope you won't mind, but—let me ask you this. What are you going to do for money over there? After what you have been accustomed to it is going to be very hard to be stinted. You should have allowed Bob to give you an income; it was your right, and the lawyers——"

Eva made a slight gesture. "Please don't worry about that! I am not blindly playing the part of a fool or a child, my dear. What my father left is quite enough for my needs—over there, if not here."

"But your father was—he left very little when he died. Forgive me, Eva, I am——"

"He left me quite sufficient, nevertheless."

"A paltry forty thousand! Oh, my dear——"

"I must ask you not to discuss this

point with me," interrupted Eva quietly. "What I have decided has been after due consideration, and is irrevocable."

"You might have mended your life so delightfully here! Ned Worthington is not a *parti* to be scoffed at."

"Here he comes now—a man whose fifty millions would doubtless be sufficient to make most women happy, despite his swollen face and evil mind; but not me, my dear, never! I have no desire to jump from the frying-pan into the fire. Now I beg of you, don't fret any more over needless anxieties. Life is too short. Help me to fence with these people gracefully, for I am not in a mood for them. Most of them have come out of curiosity; the rest from a false sense of duty."

"One at least, you must acknowledge, has come from love. Ned——"

"Love? Oh, heavens! Go back to the nursery!"

Eva turned to offer her hand to the foremost of those approaching, and a moment later was the centre of a buzzing, laughing circle that harassed her with questions and advice.

"You are to have the pink of the season at your mercy on the voyage!" said one of the men. "The English chap, Lord Hamilton, of Western fame and newspaper notoriety. You know him, do you not?"

Eva's face clouded. "Very slightly," she replied, without interest; "I really never need companions on the sea. It seems more restful to be alone."

When the last signal of departure had been sounded, and the thunder of grating chains, pulleys, whistles, bells and human voices grew dim as the steamer slid smoothly into the open sea, Eva stood leaning on the bulwark, unconsciously waving a handkerchief to those below.

Her chin rested in her hand, and into the long narrow blue eyes had come an introspective warmth like that in the eyes of a tigress who, after strife, has found a place of security wherein to compose herself in comfort.

A few paces back stood Hamilton;

fundamentally typically English, of the healthful, athletic order; superficially and educationally a cosmopolite.

He had not yet spoken to her, and now stood meditatively pulling a short mustache while noting the contour of her slight form, the poise of the small, bright-haired head with which he was already so familiar.

Eva was glad to be alone, and secretly prayed that no one might intrude upon the solitude she so craved.

The afternoon was cold and dull. Every sound seemed to ring an echo against the sickly fog through which skyscrapers, bridge and the vast, clumsy form of Liberty loomed with spectral indistinctness.

When they had passed almost out of view of the city Hamilton innocently approached her.

"I wonder if you remember me? The few occasions of our meeting were so brief, and—crowded!"

She glanced up with a gleam of resentment. "Oh, yes, quite well, Lord Hamilton."

He had studied her so minutely, unperceived, at social functions during the time he was there that the shade of displeasure was noted, though he did not reveal his recognition of it by the slightest suggestion of awkwardness. His tone had lost none of its easy composure as he asked:

"Are you crossing alone?"

"Quite."

He raised his steamer cap again. "If I can be of any service to you, I beg you will command me."

She looked at him more kindly; that he had understood was a surprise and won her interest more than anything could have done, for she was not accustomed to being understood.

"Thank you, I shall not forget," she said sincerely.

When he was gone she crossed to the other side of the deck, where a comfortable chair, rugs and books had been made ready.

Here she sat and watched the sea spread into distance; the city, where she had loved and suffered, fade. She believed she was thinking, that she

was planning the future with a just and complete comprehension of the past, while in reality her mind was dormant, her entire nature relaxed to indulge the satisfaction of solitude. She had been hurt deeply enough to feel her Self for the first time—to sense her own individuality which had never before stood to her independent of another, and with which consequently she found it difficult to communicate. The shock had also roused her more vividly to the living world; she appreciated more keenly the criticism and demands of her kind. Like one thrust suddenly from a calm and secure abode into the rush of outside life, she was dazed and morally confused.

So far thought had offered no real consolation, although an impulse, created partly of pride and partly of anger, impelled her to think, to plan a means of righting the wrong done her.

Wrong? What was the wrong? She could grasp it no more than a child can comprehend the Pyramids; it was too largely unjust.

Her claim upon Winstanley was still as real to her as the claim upon life is to one wrecked in midocean, who floats helplessly on a fragment, awaiting improbable rescue. There was a vague relief in leaving him behind her, in speeding alone, with no definite aim in view, toward the capital wherein he had become lost to her.

Since the hour her sorrow was defined she had ceased to appreciate facts as facts; they avoided her, danced and hovered just beyond reach. Never having been familiar with discord and heartache, the reasoning to which trouble educates us was not yet at her command. She was stunned beyond a full realization of her sorrow; and, as is the case with a sharply dealt wound, the more acute pain was to come later. It began the last evening of the voyage.

After the first twenty-four hours of unremunerative musing, her loneliness began to pall upon her, and she encouraged Hamilton's willingness to entertain her. His unintrusive attentions, his easy and amusing conversa-

tion, led her gradually to take pleasure in his companionship. There was nothing jarring about him, and his sensibilities were sufficiently acute to insure her against his attentions when she did not desire them. During the greater part of six days he had kept her from dwelling upon conditions that no amount of thinking could now remedy. He had read aloud, recounted amusing anecdotes, interesting experiences of his own in the Western States, and strange customs of foreign countries he had visited during his rambles over the world, which, for a man only arrived at his thirty-fourth year, had been considerable.

The last evening was splendid with undimmed stars and soft with briny zephyrs that gave it more the character of June than October.

They paced the deck for the last time under that brilliant canopy of night, far from the noisy world, breathing the ocean's vast calm and the untainted air of the heavens. Eva regretted almost as much as he that the voyage was about to end; she had enjoyed the infinite peace, and the comfort of associating with one who had so unpretendingly placed himself upon a footing of unconventional ease with her. As a man she did not consider him; she had not even consciously appreciated his fine appearance, nor the refined and tactful qualities of character that had caused her to find pleasure in his association. He had served the occasion admirably; beyond that he meant nothing. Consequently his unusually taciturn mood disturbed her; she sensed a serious significance beneath his silence, and began to dread something—the landing—life in Paris—she knew not what!

She turned to the bulwark and looked down into the black water, through whose silence they were gliding with a silky hiss.

Hamilton folded his arms and stared into the night; then he, too, leaned on the bulwark.

"I'm in a deuced morbid mood," he said heavily.

"Are you?" returned Eva, without

stirring. "Well, please don't give it expression."

He tried to see her face in the dark. "Why? Are you?"

"No, not morbid; why should I be? But I hate morbid talk. Tomorrow I shall be in gay Paris; that will divert me."

"And I?"

"Well?"

"Shall I be in Paris, too?"

"Shall you? I don't know."

"You know it depends upon you." His tone made her heart contract; she grew cold. The suggestion of emotion in his voice reminded her that she was free; that he knew it; that the whole wide world spread empty before her. It was a shock more poignant than the first blow had been, because it could not stun. Her loneliness was the more pitiable because she recognized in that moment more keenly than ever before the empty place in her life, as one, recovering from the first shock of bereavement, sees for the first time the empty place at table, and knows that the loss is real.

Her silence encouraged him, but so little that his voice was low and husky when he spoke. "In these few days your influence has wrought a change in me. I could not utter to you the things I have spoken so glibly to others. Somehow—perhaps I'm a fool—I seem to have been waiting for you, to——"

She stepped back with a little wild gesture.

"Oh, there! You *are* a—you are mad! A few days—the sea—proximity! I am not looking for romance. If you knew anything about me you would see you are making a very false step!"

"I know all about you," he said, with a change to stern intensity. "I knew it a month ago. There is nothing—I cannot see why——"

She was about to turn away, but paused with a sharp laugh and a quick, angry deepening of color in the dark. "You! Do you imagine I am considering you? Do you think—? Oh, why have you spoiled the last evening of this peaceful trip?"

"Because I love you!" He caught her hand and held it in spite of her struggles. "Because——"

"Let me go! How dare you do this? You have little taste to submit me to such a scene upon so slight acquaintance."

"Is it necessary to be conventional at such a time?"

"Let me go. This—this is unpardonable."

He dropped her hand. "You may be harsh with me, because I am at your mercy," he said, with real pain.

Eva heeded only her own, and grew savage under the sting of it.

"You have been presuming, insulting!" she said, in a swift desire to retaliate. "A voyage association does not justify your speaking so to me. I—did not expect it of you."

As she hurried into the dark he stood an instant thinking, trying to define his fault, then bounded after her.

"Let me speak to you one word," he pleaded, his face showing white in the glare of an electric light. "I lost my head. For God's sake don't leave me like this! I know I was a fool. I—a woman can't understand; the words escaped me. I'd give my life to unsay them, to feel I had not spoiled——"

"What does it matter? It is done; there is no more to say."

Her cold relentlessness calmed him, but did not stem his desire to make amends.

"It isn't as though I—we knew nothing of each other," he said, with more self-possession. "Bob and I were chums for a bit in Paris; I—knew you through him; I couldn't feel like an absolute stranger, even before I met you in New York last year."

"Why haven't you told me this before?" she asked.

He stared at her. "What?"

"That you knew him. Why have you kept it from me?"

"You have never spoken of him; I imagined you preferred to avoid the subject."

Eva was looking vacantly into his

face; a new sensation was passing over her. "You knew it all, then?" she said presently, focusing her eyes on his. "This is why you dared to speak to me as you have?"

"I was a brute. The existence a fellow in my position leads today makes reckless inconsequence second nature. I rushed in where——"

She walked slowly back to where she had stood before, and rested her chin in her hands. He followed in perplexed uncertainty.

"God knows I would do anything to make amends. I'd get down here on my knees if I could hope to win your pardon by doing it."

As she made no movement, he stood watching her, wondering. She seemed very far away from him, and she was. A great space was growing between her and the humanity she once looked upon as her natural kin; she was groping confusedly in a foggy new atmosphere; she was feeling the laboring pains of new instincts, new understanding. She understood now why the other women had called her a fool; why their eyes had opened when her love for Winstanley had escaped her unawares; why they were stunned by her preference to live on next to nothing, instead of enjoying the handsome competence it was her right to accept from the man she had married, who had tired of her. That he had tired of her meant as little to them as it did to this man!

She saw it all now written on the black face of the ocean, plainly, cruelly real. Yet there was the Past! Like the impression of a vine that has been roughly torn from the wall to which its first shoots had fastened themselves, that past was still visible to her, though she knew that it was dead. She at once dreaded and craved the process that was to wipe it out, not only for the impression, but for the cherished hope that she now knew must die with it. She felt suddenly matured, ripened, wise. The smooth rush of the ship, the black distance of night and sea, seemed but an insignificant background to an immense

inner life that spread its wide horizon about her. The definable and substantial ground she had felt in spite of all must be under her feet was nothing but an infinity of space; she was alone, unshackled, floating in a sphere that contained no realities. The air had once taken shapes; she had clung to one, and it was nothing. This Hamilton knew, and he had seen no wrong in venturing upon her solitude.

"If you could only forget that stupidity," he said. "I swear you shall never have cause to regret it, if you will give me one more chance."

His voice brought her relief; she straightened up without looking at him, and spoke with unfamiliar calm.

"Listen: we shall imagine nothing has been said. It is easy enough—what are words? There are greater noises to drown them."

"If I could find some to express——"

"Let us be impersonal. Tell me what you knew of him—all, *everything*."

"Winstanley? Do you——?"

"First try to understand me. If our friendship means anything to you put aside for the time your feelings. I want you to meet me as sincerely as I am coming to you. I want you to tell me everything, the smallest, the blackest detail; I want you to forget yourself. If you cannot do this, say so now, and let us be done."

"I am ready to do anything you ask, but—I'm not good at detailing, or—I really would bungle everything. Besides, what do I know?"

"It is hardly a moment when a man's honor to another should stand in the way. Nor am I asking you to make a concession to prove the sincerity of your interest in me. He has hidden little from me; it is merely a caprice. Tell me the particulars. There is in reality nothing crudely lawful or legitimate in our world—you know this; we owe nothing to the conventionalities we have been educated to ignore privately. Answer my questions; you can do this. But answer them with the absolute truth that our present relations entitle me to. We are outside

the world of prescribed right and wrong, are we not? We secretly do with a clear conscience whatever we think is right, when it pertains to our own lives, and to no other. I trust you; trust me, then. Can you do this?"

"I can do it—yes."

"Will you do it?"

"Yes."

"When he was in Paris, were you with him much?"

"Nearly always."

"And your time was spent how?"

"We had a joint apartment on the Champs Elysées. I had a studio and played at painting. He went in for music."

"How?"

"What do you mean?"

"How did he go in for music?"

"Oh, he scratched a violin for two hours every day, until I threatened leaving him; then he devoted himself to the composition of an opera, and nearly rang the insides out of a piano."

"He did all this during the three weeks he was in Paris, looking for an automobile?"

"Yes."

"How long was he in Paris with you?"

"Three months."

A moment of silence. Eva was still looking into the dark. When she spoke her voice was deep and sharper. "There is no use prolonging this; you don't mean to be honest with me."

"I do; forgive me. By heaven! it isn't an easy job."

"It is the greatest service you could do me."

"Even the darker shades?"

"I want everything. Remember, the black places are medicine. He did not go to London at all?"

"He went over for two weeks with—her."

"Who?"

"Adelaide Fulton."

"Who is she?"

"A woman he knew in Chicago ten years ago."

"Tell me what you know of her."

Hamilton leaned over the bulwark.

The rush of the ship sounded with soft, even monotony, and against it the laugh of a man rang clearly from the card-room below.

"I shall tell you all I saw; his confidences aren't mine," he said, after an interval.

Eva touched his arm. "I ask you for all you know as a wounded man might ask another for help," she said, more gently than she had yet spoken. "A service is not worth much without some self-sacrifice. You would do more for a man friend in trouble. Why should you begrudge me what I ask at the price of a small sacrifice to your self-esteem?"

As he was silent she added, with real appeal: "You may hurt yourself a trifle in your own eyes, but not in mine, and I pledge you my word no other——"

"Oh, I don't care for that! What is it to me what the rest think? It's the instinct, that's all. But when we come to that, what are moral instincts but the outcome of laws made for the masses?"

"You can help me a very great deal by telling me all that you know. You will be doing me a service."

After another brief silence he said: "Your interest only makes my guilt greater, and it increases the temptation to leave nothing ugly out. You must see this."

"I know; forgive me. Tell me mere facts; since I ask for them you are doing no wrong."

To encourage him, she broke the silence again by repeating her former question.

"I never saw her before he came to Paris," replied Hamilton, "but believe he had been entangled with her in Chicago before his father died. She was not of his world, and old Winstanley got rid of her by putting up the funds to take her to Paris to have her voice developed for opera."

"She had a voice?"

"Yes, one of worth, as it proved. It meant more to her than marriage with a man likely to be cut off without a halfpenny of the paternal lucre; so

she demurred not at all, and accepted the offer."

"And—what else?" Memories were flashing through Eva's mind, memories of her husband's love of music and her own tireless efforts during every free hour to make herself capable of gratifying it.

"Oh, she received a handsome monthly allowance until Winstanley died; studied from the best masters, and lived like a lady in Paris."

"And then?"

"How do you mean?"

"Is she still studying?"

"Lord, no! Do you mean you have never heard of her? She is the star of the Opéra Comique."

"And he—Bob?"

"He saw her there, of course."

"Openly?"

"In every way, if you desire the truth. He is bewitched, mad, sunk as a rat in a bucket of tar; and the meaning of it passes my understanding."

There was a short silence. Eva hoped he might continue, that he might explain why the situation was incomprehensible to him, while something under her pain tempted her to say: "Oh, music—he is devoted to music; he would kneel at the feet of anyone who could sing well." Instead she remained coldly and thoughtfully silent, although she was not thinking. Most of this she had known before, for Winstanley had made no attempt at concealment, save the woman's name and the fact that he had been with her in Paris.

After waiting some time, Hamilton leaned nearer and asked: "Have I told you too much?"

She uttered a short little laugh. "No; why too much? Tell me more."

Two bells were struck; the voice of a sailor calling reached them; the black water hissed and seethed far below, and glowed with silver phosphorescence.

Eva stirred. "When do we get in tomorrow?" she asked.

"At seven."

"An ungodly hour to be waked!"

"One needn't leave until nine."

"Oh, but the noise! Good night." She held out her hand.

"May I see you as far as Paris tomorrow?" he asked as he held it.

"Yes, but I go second, you know. No more private compartments! I have changed my habit of holding aloof from the masses."

II

THE journey from Havre to the capital was uninteresting, and insufferable from overheating. Two blank-faced nuns entered the carriage at Rouen, and a little black-eyed tradesman, whose quick, restless movements gave him the appearance of a black-and-tan terrier. A raw-boned, discontented-looking soldier had been the vehicle's third acquisition since Havre, his wide red trousers and cap giving a splash of brightness to the sombre interior.

Eva, to avoid talking, had opened a novel, but her eyes followed the printed lines without grasping their meaning. After all, it was strange she should have elected to come to Paris of all places! Perhaps it was foolish; she might be running a risk; he, Winstanley, might misunderstand it. But what did it matter? She was to live her life for herself now. Paris attracted her; it was gay, bright, independent, and clear of the smoky atmosphere of her old life. She would begin again, and ease away the lines brought to her face by past months. The world would be different, but she might yet laugh in it. Why not? What folly to take anything too seriously! She was still young; other woman had survived the wreck of their ideals.

She turned a leaf quickly and came upon some conversation that relieved after the uncomprehending perusal of close-set type. She tried to follow it while in her mind some lines she had read somewhere rang with clear persistence:

I said to my grief, "We two must part,

Part now, and for aye," I said.

So I buried it deep, deep down in my heart.

"It is dead," I cried, "it is dead!"

As I laid it down in its burial-place,

It stared with threatening eyes;

As the grave closed over its mocking face,

"I shall rise!" it said, "I shall rise!"

She turned swiftly to Hamilton.

"Have we arrived?"

The train was slackening; voices shouted without.

Hamilton dropped the paper whereon he had been studying for some minutes the headlines, "*La Russie contre le Japon.*"

"Not yet; the next. Are you tired?"

"More than tired. I feel as though my soul were wearing through my body. What a lot of nonsensical stoppages! We have been longer on this trip from Havre than on the voyage from New York!"

Hamilton's connoisseur glance lingered on the petulant curve of the clear-cut lips.

"You were not intended for economies. This carriage is loathsome. Had we had a comfortable private compartment we——"

"Oh, no! It would have been deadly. These people help to amuse; if they only were a little more Frenchy, as it is understood by us!"

Hamilton's eyebrows went up; he ran his finger along the back of his head and mentally digested the flat-tery of her words.

"More sallow-faced spinsters!" exclaimed Eva as two thin, middle-class women got in with numberless bundles, and, cackling like disturbed hens, sprawled themselves over the opposite seat, occupying sufficient space for three. Immediately after them came a neatly appareled individual of the second-class modiste type, who made for the six-inch space they left.

"No, no! *il n'y a point de place!*" shrieked one of the first-comers, giving the modiste a push as she was about to seat herself. "You may not sit here."

"But I must! There is plenty of space; move over."

"I'll see myself move over! Never an inch! Why do you come here, when there are many other——?"

"Then I shall sit upon you!"

"If you do you'll regret it, as the good God hears me!"

"Get over there!"

"No, there's no room for you. You would crush me. Get out!"

"We'll see!" The modiste squeezed her ample person into the narrow space, and sent the two spinsters together like billiard balls.

"*C'est épouvantable!*" screamed one. "Some people have no decency! *Dieu!* if I were made like that—if I had such a body to find space for, I'd be polite enough not to make it an intrusion upon others!"

"You might both of you have set your pack of bones on the window-ledge—that's good enough for such as you. Pah! it's easily seen you have been made fighters because you've never had anyone to fight for you! Poor things, it's pitiable to be such failures!"

The spinsters looked toward the door.

"If Louis does not come soon he will be left!" said one. "La! la! there is the signal! Louis! Louis!"

"*Le voilà!*" screamed the other, catching sight of a small boy with large ears and an enormous bow under his chin.

"*Mon pauvre garçon*, there is no room here for you, because—all classes of persons are allowed to enter! Get into the next carriage, *mon cher petit*, and fear nothing; it will be only for a few moments!"

"*Parbleu!*" gasped the modiste, looking about at everyone present, "and I was expected to climb down again, and risk losing the train, for that rat!"

The spinsters replied only by a simultaneous shove that was returned with interest, and the train started, amid a war of snappy exclamations and dagger glances.

Eva was laughing behind her book, and Hamilton, with the air of one to whom there is nothing new, was enjoying her laughter.

"Behold the mustard and pepper of the revolutionary salad!" she said, when the train's rattle had brought silence.

"They are she-devils," he returned.

"I'd rather meet a hungry tiger in its jungle than match words with an enraged Frenchwoman!"

"Yet they have their charm for men."

"For Frenchmen, yes. Women are *la distraction exquisite* of the nation; the men have learned to dote upon their very faults. After all, it's my opinion that most men love a woman when her faults begin to appear."

"Oh, no; a woman dares to show her faults when she knows she is loved."

"I don't know. That is the more accepted view, but natural deductions become sophistry when they are brought to bear upon the higher realms of society. The atmosphere we breathe is so entirely adverse to nature that we need a new code of laws, a new dictionary, a new vocabulary, new maxims, new interpretation. We have drunk and eaten so fully of the forbidden fruit that we no longer see the grass green. Right and wrong have become confused, like lamp-posts to the vision of a drunkard."

"Nonsense. Do you see life like this?"

"Certainly; and my very recognition of it makes its power more intoxicating."

As she looked at him there was interested calculation lurking under the puzzled inquiry.

In meeting her eyes his softened. "Do you know, you have remained surprisingly innocent in spite of having been reared in this atmosphere."

"Have I?" Her color deepened slightly; a thought flashed across the straight brows. "You mean stupid. Dare to speak truth!"

"No, innocent; and the reason is not difficult to find; it is still more with you than you wish to acknowledge."

Again her glance was full upon him, now critically inquisitive. She turned quickly to the window. "Paris!" she said softly. "Thank heaven we are here!"

Hamilton studied the pale profile, so lovely in spite of its faults—the line of the chin a trifle too sharp, the nose

too short, but the brow white, smooth, regal, above eyes that held worlds of bewildering power, passion, intellect and independence. It was an unbalanced face, partly child and partly woman of the world, and in this combination were suggested possibilities that thrilled him. Browning's lines went through his head:

Had she willed it, still had stood the screen
So slight, so sure, 'twixt my love and her:
I could fix her face with a guard between,
And find her soul as when friends confer,
Friends—lovers that might have been.

"Now for the ordeal of trunk examining!" murmured Eva, starting up as the train came to a standstill.

"If you will permit it, my man will attend to that. He is an adept at balking officials, and knows most of them here personally. Where will you stop?" he asked, when she had acquiesced.

"A place recommended by a woman on the steamer, called the Pension Rodinot."

"A pension!"

"Yes; I had chosen the Continental, but dread the loneliness of hotel life."

"You may feel more lonely in a group of boarding-house Americans and sightseeing British spinsters."

"Oh, no; I shall like it. I need a new atmosphere."

He stood looking straight into her face; then, leaning from the door, called a *facteur* for the bags.

"Where is this estimable domicile?" he asked, as they entered a shabby little cab attached to two small, broken-down cobs that might have been vivified from an old print.

"Five rue de Bassano."

On the way he said: "I shall put up at the Elysées; it is near. May I see you sometimes?"

"Are you going to stay here?"

"May I?"

"Choose for yourself; but remember I shall acknowledge no responsibility, no obligation."

"I chose the day we left New York. May I offer you a little advice?"

"If I do not accept it 'neat' it will undoubtedly be served to me dis-

guised at odd moments. What is it?"

"Your wisest plan at present is to have diversion. Don't let yourself be choked in antagonistic environment. If you are determined to become a *pensionnaire* at least let me take you out sometimes, let me amuse you beyond thinking."

"I am not afraid to think."

"No, but I am afraid to let you think."

A short silence; Eva pressed her fingers more fitly into the glove. "Listen," she said. "You must not assume any proprietorship over me. Remember, I am free to do as I wish, even to the smallest detail or the most extravagant eccentricity. The moment my moods jar you, leave me, but never remonstrate."

Hamilton looked out of the window. They rattled through narrow streets, across the brilliant, crowded Champs Elysées, into the stoned rue de Basano.

"I only want to say this," he said, as he laid his hand on the cab handle. "A boat whose balance is all on one side is likely to capsize. Trim yourself to meet any sudden winds, for they are inevitable to a nature like yours, and, once turned, you will sink."

Eva's brows knitted; she followed him to the pavement. "I have listened," she said. "But I never wish to hear anything of the sort again. Spare me your advice in future; this is all I ask."

She was watching the *concierge* take her bags from the imperial; Hamilton was studying her.

"May I come for you this evening?"

"No; I want to fit myself in here first."

"When, then?"

"I shall let you know."

"You are annoyed?"

"I have no patience with a person who treads twice on the same foot."

He seemed puzzled how to reply, and ended by saying awkwardly: "I know—by Jove! Well, *au revoir* until the spirit moves you! I see there is no use appealing for clemency. But—

I am sorry! Don't let the week stretch out before you send for me."

"The Elysées?"

"Yes."

"I shall write you; good-bye."

"Thanks; good-bye."

III

THE *pension*, after six days' acquaintance, proved better than she had expected. There was the inevitable all-knowing, while hopelessly ignorant, American element—predominantly female; the eccentric old Englishwoman and sharp-nosed, eyeglassed spinster tourist; the jolly *abbé* and musical aspirant. The hostess was a woman worthy of better place, a very pearl for Paris where landladies are a scourge. Eva found amusement in listening to conversations indulged in at the long main table, where Madame Rodinot presided. For herself she had secured a private table, from which she could look into the refreshing green of a collection of palms arranged in a window alcove, at the room's farther end. It was all very new and interesting; and although the loud voice and not irreproachable diction of a California widow often grated upon her, the unfamiliarity of it all acted as a tonic, made her imagine herself a girl again, inexperienced and preparing to fight her way through the world.

She dressed quietly, that she might not attract too much attention, for, though the people were entertaining at a distance, she felt that closer contact would chafe. The *pension* was composed of five flats, that made it possible to live quite independently of the inmates, whom she saw only at meal-times and with whom she had as yet had no intercourse.

She found it amusing to fit up her rooms on the second *étage*; there was a certain novel charm in choosing with economy, in stretching fifty francs over an area wherein she was accustomed to spend a thousand indifferently. It was something to do,

and kept her so absorbed during those six days that she wholly forgot Hamilton.

She worked unflaggingly, rushing feverishly from Bon Marché to the Louvre; hammering nails in the walls herself; blending colors; upholstering; sewing; arranging flowers and palms.

When it was all done she sat in the midst of her pretty boudoir and felt her heart sink like a stone. There was nothing more to do! Why had she done it? The draperies, the pictures, the silent bits of furniture seemed to speak loneliness. She felt she had already dragged out a long, empty life in those rooms; they bore the stamp of a deserted woman, a personality so unlike herself—a lean widow in black, with dull eyes and a resigned, half-bitter expression—a creature with no place in the world and no love for it. She had come to this!—a mediocre female with no future and a vague past wherein there were no strong high lights, nothing that made her feel she had once really lived. For even those three years of love and gaiety appeared now like a period of waiting—a happy, trustful waiting for something that never came.

She went to the inevitable mirror over the mantel and looked with cold horror into the pale face it reflected. Never had the lines appeared so real and distinct. She was getting old! She was deliberately losing her hold upon youth, and for what? Something must be done; she must get out of herself. She thought of Hamilton, and grew faint with a sort of moral nausea.

She sat down by the open fire and tried to think it out, forcing herself to face the situation honestly.

Was she grieving for Winstanley? Did she love him still? Her answer was that she despised him. All his cruelty stood out hideously, stirring a desire for vengeance that made her pace the room. Why could she not become interested in Hamilton—in anything? Was it rage and pique that had brought about this sense of moral dislocation, this incompleteness

of being, this desire to lie low and let the world and life slip by her? She wished that she had kept one photograph of her husband, that she might more distinctly recall the familiar face whose smallest characteristic had once been so deeply engraved on her heart. Now her memory of it was disguised by the effect of her own thoughts; she knew it was not a true portrait, and it fretted her. If she could only get some interest in life, some real interest! Here she was in Paris, the centre of art; why should she not take up something—painting, sculpture?

She again pictured herself the widow in black, growing old with a hobby, joining the vast army of disappointed women, long in the tooth, sallow and meek, who turn to art as a *dernier resort* and fill in the empty hours and years with tireless labor that never rises above the mediocrity that yearly adds to earth's great burden. She shuddered.

She felt at her feet the black chasm to whose brink women who dare to look upon life independently, whose sensitive intuition feels a reality beyond the fog of popular dictation, are brought on learning that the star they saw beyond is but the reflected brightness of their own eyes. To such natures pain that penetrates to the soul awakes an acute appreciation of things and develops an appetite that can never be appeased.

No man can ever comprehend that intense moment when the element he has sensed and succumbed to in a woman is, by his bungling hand, rushed to premature development. The normal woman is a centre of passion, or, rather, of that indefinable essence of life for which we have no name. But once the delicate mechanism is jarred, the cup tilted from its natural poise, the treasure either congeals or seethes to poison. No one can ever paint that life within life—the invisible woman, sensitive and fragile as the veins in the stem of a flower, and as important to her existence.

She sat for a long time trying to think, while mentally facing the va-

cancy that in the hour of real sorrow envelops humanity like a return of the First Day, with nothing promised and nothing to forget. Upon this vacancy the prolonged, sharp buzz of an electric bell announced the dressing hour. As it continued with maddening persistency, she covered her ears. The prospect of descending again to that crowded dining-room, with its heavy atmosphere and hum of illiterate English and nasal French, revolted her. There had come a distaste for her surroundings, a terrified sense of being out of the world to which she belonged. Poverty meant nothing; enough was sufficient; she never pictured herself as poor. But this sudden ostracism—this loneliness! She hastily lighted the gas and went to her desk. She would have Hamilton take her out to dinner—some place amusing—Maxim's, where they could see the life of Paris!

When halfway through her short note there was a knock at the door, and the maid entered with a letter from him.

As Eva read it her desire vanished. There was in the words an undertone of impatience to see her. She could tolerate no demands that could, even in the least, threaten the absorbing egotism of her own grief. She wrote coolly in reply that she was busy and did not wish to go out.

After having tea and toast in her room she ordered a closed cab—the only sort to be had at that season—and drove for two hours up and down the Champs Elysées, from the Arc de Triomphe to the Place de la Concorde and back. It calmed her to watch the steady rush of life, the blaze of illumination; to hear the continued beat of hurrying hoofs on the wood, and the jingle of bells. It gave an elevated character to her sorrow to be thus alone, outside of the gay life of the world. There came to her a great yearning, a desire to be good, to do good, to devote her life to some high and worthy cause. A lump rose in her throat; tears gathered, and threw back long strips of light to the tall

lamps. She reveled in a sort of ecstatic yielding to morbid impressions that never reached the completeness of definite thought. There was pleasure in this because her trouble was beyond her comprehension and comprised the fascination of mystery.

The next morning, as she read letters from New York in which the writers—women—embroidered upon the triumphs and delights of their existence in the wild whirl once so familiar to her, someone in the room above started singing scales in a high, throaty soprano. As she had not heard it before, Eva concluded it was the voice of a new lodger, and wondered to which of the fourteen unfavored females at the long table it could be attributed.

Though the same notes were repeated over and over again, the sound did not irritate her; she found herself interested in listening, especially when the singer finally launched into the opening act of "Faust":

"Non, monsieur, je ne suis demoiselle, ni belle."

It was not a sympathetic voice, nor in any way worthy to essay the interpretation of that sublime stanza, yet Eva became interested in marking the corrections made, the method of taking the notes, and wondered whether she could not do as well, whether it would not be worth her while to try.

She sang over the words, and there was in her voice such a warmth and depth of feeling that it brought tears to her eyes. Why not do it?

She started up and paced the room, burning with impatience. She would develop a voice; she would sing; she would interpret with full ardor and passion all that was lying panting within her; she would make the world hear her, and learn it; and he—Winstanley?

When the second buzz of the electric bell told her dinner was served she descended, impatient to see the singer, to learn how one should take up the work.

It was not long before Eva discov-

ered her at the end of the long table nearest her own. The California widow was soon loudly in conversation with the singer. She called her Miss Wallace, and paid her some pedantic compliments upon her voice.

"I don't see as there's a real good singer in Paris," she was saying. "Look at the grand opera here. My, we wouldn't stand that sort of screech-in' in Amurica! Why, they'd be hissed off the stage! Then how's it run? Those gawky women foller-in' you around as though they owned the whole show, and demandin' money at every turn. Goodness! I've never seen such leeches! And the accommodations! I can just tell you this, people say Amurica is dear, but you get your money's worth over there, I tell you! Here you pay eight francs for a seat in a box, and you find yourself crowded up with a lot of strangers with hats on big enough to cover the whole stage. If you think that's worth payin' for, I don't. Everything is extra; fifty centimes here, a franc there! It amounts to the same thing in the long run, and you get nothin' for it."

"Oh, there are some good singers even here," returned Miss Wallace, in a smooth English voice, which, although slightly flavored with Cockney, was a relief after the high ejaculations of the Californian. She was tall and so thin as to appear raw-boned, the face long and sunken, the eyes somewhat prominent, but large and brilliant. They were delicately blackened and the high cheekbones rouged with a daring that seemed out of place in one whose predestined condition appeared to be clearly spinster propriety. The fair hair, coiffed and tinted in the French style, grew prettily about a low brow, and was Englishly neat.

The Californian sniffed. "Who are they, I'd like to know?"

"Ackté is one, and Madame Bréval another, at the grand opera; and Adelaide Fulton at the Comique."

"Oh, Fulton, yes; she's good. But she's an Amurican. My! how she

spins the notes out in 'Manon'! I guess they'll never have another like her there. They say she isn't much liked, either, by those Frenchwomen. I guess they have many a row."

"I should fancy, being *American*, she'd be above that!" remarked an old Englishwoman opposite.

"It's all rubbish," said Miss Wallace. "She never has a tiff, and, what's more, her head is not in the least bit turned. I know her quite well——"

"You know her?"

"Yes, it was she who introduced me to Monsieur Cavalier. He taught her——"

"But she's a woman of—no reputation, isn't she?"

"I know nothing about that. She's probably as good as most women in Paris; and she is certainly a jolly sight more amusing than any I've met, and one of the cleverest——"

"Oh, I've heard so many stories——"

"They say the King of Greece is devoted to her, besides the manager——"

"Yes, she holds her place as much through favoritism as——"

"Oh, what stuff! Her voice is enough!"

All at the long table were now speaking at once in loud voices, and in the hubbub Eva could hear nothing, though keen interest made her strain for what Miss Wallace said. She determined to speak to her, and, when the repast was finished, followed the others into the small, overcrowded drawing-room.

She had never before entered the room, and as her eye traveled over its superabundance of furniture, the inevitable handsome bronze clock and candelabra, the impressive pastel of the daughter of the house, the walled sofa and chairs, prints and chromos, she wondered if it were typical of *pensions*.

The occupants were even more heterogeneous. A dark-skinned Haytian was showing his collection of postcards to a Swedish girl; an Irish woman, of the clever-eyed, large-

nosed type, was preparing to play cards with a faded Austrian; two South Americans, a Spanish woman and an Englishman were gathered about the fire; Miss Wallace, the Californian and a French countess stood in an uncertain group conversing loudly with several others.

Eva turned over the leaves of a guest book until she saw Miss Wallace approach the fire, and, on the pretense of warming herself, she followed her.

Strangely enough she felt less at her ease than she had ever felt in company before. In entering drawing-rooms occupied by people of her own class she had never known the slightest twinge of self-consciousness; in acting as hostess to important foreign dignitaries, in receiving *en masse* the most critical of New York's smartest folk, during the ordeal of her presentations at the courts of England and Germany, she had never experienced the discomfort she endured beneath the curious and surreptitious scrutiny of these *pensionnaires*. It was the instinctive shrinking of antagonism; the terror of the proud peacock amid the cackling, wondering fowls of the barnyard; the diffidence of a foreigner in an unfamiliar country.

"I think I heard you singing this morning," she said, as genially as she could, while stretching her hands to the fire. "You are studying here?"

Miss Wallace gave her a quick glance from the corner of her eyes; then, turning her face aside as though to hide some disfigurement, replied sharply:

"Yes, I am."

"It must be very interesting. Have you been studying long?"

"Oh, yes; five years. I finished in the spring."

"How happy you must be!"

"Yes, it's jolly to feel the bothering part is over."

Eva looked into the fire; she longed to have her to herself for a few moments. Miss Wallace arranged the neat white frill at her wrists.

"Paris is probably the very best

place to study," remarked Eva, to hold the subject.

"It is understood to be, but there's no end of rubbish here."

"How do you mean?"

"They teach such rot!"

"Oh, really? One must be careful? I am glad you told me."

"You are studying?"

"No; but I am thinking of taking it up—not professionally, but for my own pleasure. I should like to know more about your master. Won't you come up to my room? There's a fire there, and we can talk more comfortably."

They had a few moments' chat about music before a soothing wood fire. With unnecessary tactfulness she gradually brought the conversation about to Adelaide Fulton, and, after learning a few insignificant points concerning her—diffidence preventing her investigating too minutely—she arranged to visit the singer the following afternoon with Miss Wallace, who was quite sure Adelaide would be delighted to know her.

"It will interest me immensely to meet her," said Eva. "You are sure she does not object to meeting women?"

"Oh, certainly! Why should she?"

"I have always heard she considers only men worthy of her time. She has them all at her feet, has she not?"

"Oh, she has admirers, of course; but she likes women, though she takes jolly good care to know only the right sort."

"You say she was never married?"

"No, never; though she has had the best of opportunities. There is a millionaire from your side who would marry her tomorrow. He is daft about her, and such a nice fellow! Just now he is away, but is returning soon."

Eva felt the color creeping into her face; her throat seemed choked. She leaned over to arrange a log. "American, did you say?"

"Yes; from New York, I fancy—I've forgotten the name. Wordsworth—no; something like that. He gives her presents worth fortunes."

"Winstanley?" queried Eva clearly, in spite of the throbbing in her throat, and still bending low as she dug tongs into a log.

"That's it—Winstanley! You've heard of the affair over there, even? A ripping chap! Awfully good-looking, and generous as a lord."

Eva felt she had gone white. She dared not let the girl see her face. Her arms and legs had grown cold and numb, and seemed incapable of movement. To hear that name spoken thus, to know it was upon the lips of the lowest gossip-monger in connection with this woman, stunned her, although she had been prepared.

Fearing the silence she could not break might excite her visitor's curiosity, she lifted the log and let it drop.

"These are so heavy," she whispered.

Miss Wallace leaned forward. "Let me do it."

Eva seized the chance to get into the rear of the room, on the pretense of closing the door to her bedchamber. She felt dazed and aged. Her husband, the man she had given the best of her life to—the freshest, purest love any woman could give! She knew the horror of it was stamped upon her face, and was afraid to reveal it. She moved about, touching things here and there.

"I shall have a piano brought up," she said when Miss Wallace had arranged the fire. "I shall have it there, don't you think?"

Miss Wallace, rising, regarded the spot indicated, and expressed her approval; whereupon Eva called her attention to a vase she had purchased the day before, and swiftly to other things; cushions, picture-frames—anything to prevent her face being scrutinized.

When the girl left her she locked the door and returned to her chair by the fire. There she sat, her hands supporting her chin until the flames died in gray ashes. She did not think distinctly of Winstanley; more of Adelaide Fulton and of her own inability to hold him hers. What was the

charm? What did this woman give that she had denied him? She tried to picture the singer. From the little she had gleaned she saw her tall and ravishingly thin; a white, interesting face, with strange eyes, burning, indefinable, deeply set, beautiful. The hands—Miss Wallace had spoken particularly of them—thin and white, and suggesting subtle power. She compared herself with the picture, and beside it she seemed small and insignificant, an ordinary woman—a candle beside a witch's flame.

IV

THEY went in the morning, for Miss Fulton never received women after luncheon. Her apartment was the *entresol* of one of the familiar, wide-ported mansions on the rue Boétie. The door was opened by a neat, keen-eyed maid, who ushered them, with an air of conferring a favor, across a narrow hallway into a small, exquisitely appointed drawing-room à l'*Empire*, in color pale sage green, with one or two strikingly beautiful paintings and rough drawings covering the wider wall spaces, and on the floor, leaning carelessly against the wainscoting, a large, half-finished pastel that bore the unmistakable imprint of a master hand. There were few draperies, a superb piano, several rarely lovely flowering plants and some bits of irreproachable marble and bronze.

Miss Wallace made a remark about the room, but Eva did not hear it. She was inwardly tremulous and anxious. On the card her companion had sent in she had hastily written "Miss Blackwell," fearing to intrust even her maiden name to the custody of this house where he visited; and she awaited the advent of Miss Fulton with as much inward agitation as a girl awaits the coming of her lover.

She heard a step, and braced herself to greet her. It was the maid returning to say Miss Fulton was in bed, and begged that they would go to her there.

"Does she—realize that you are not

alone?" asked Eva, as she followed the English girl.

"Oh, yes. She doesn't mind that. Bed is the same as drawing-room to her."

After a swift knock, she pushed open a door at the farther end of the hallway, and revealed a dainty boudoir in soft pink and white; a bed embellished with delicate silk curtains and canopy; more flowers; a toilet-table blazing with costly articles in silver, enamel and mother-of-pearl; luxuriant chairs and rugs—all sweetly fragrant and delightfully neat.

Eva's eyes swept to the bed; on the way they fell upon a man in riding clothes, seated upon an upholstered stool near the bedside, beating his leg impatiently with a crop. As they entered he arose and bowed solemnly. Eva looked past him toward the woman in bed, bolstered upon mountains of rosy pillows.

She was startled. How unlike what she had imagined! The eyes indeed were strange: round, greenish, scintillating, but for the rest a worn, faded face, dry and intersected with lines and sunken beneath high cheekbones. A short crop of stiff, oxygenized hair fell about shoulders whose leanness was clearly visible through the soft, rose-colored *peignoir*; the mouth, though well formed and agreeable, was wide and unyouthful. It was the face of a woman considerably her senior, a woman who had lived rapidly, and obedient to no law but that of common sense, and who had wisely kept herself within the bounds of that law. In viewing her one forgot the lack of beauty under the charm of interest. She represented an individual self-creation rather than a woman.

As she greeted Miss Wallace, her eyes were upon Eva.

"You know I am singing tonight, yet you come—daring devil!" she said, with clear enunciation and a slight foreign accent.

"I had forgotten," returned Miss Wallace apologetically. "It is good of you to receive us. This is Miss Blackford,"

Eva saw in the wide eyes that the difference in the name had been noted, but was too trivial to be commented upon.

"I appreciate very much your receiving me, a stranger," she murmured, "and hope you will not let us tire you."

"Oh, no; in bed I am never tired. It will freshen me to talk to someone new. Find chairs, won't you? This is Mr. Perrot." Then, in French: "You had better go now, Pierre. You've worried me enough for one day."

"When shall I see you again?"

"How do I know? If I could predict that with certainty I might know where I shall be when I'm sixty—a question of much greater importance."

"To you, perhaps."

"Yes, to me. I certainly cannot spend precious time considering you just at present. Be off!"

"I shall come at four this afternoon."

"No, you shall not! Are you mad? Pierre, don't provoke me! I ask you to keep away from me today."

"Tomorrow morning, then?" He had risen, and stood looking down at her with haggard, hungry eyes.

Adelaide brushed her hair back, causing a reckless exposure of high forehead. "You madden me! For God's sake try to remember that I never want to see you the days I sing in the evening. I have told you so often!"

"Tomorrow at eleven?"

"Yes. Good-bye!"

They touched hands, and Mr. Perrot, with a low bow to the others, withdrew.

Miss Fulton's glance fell once more critically upon Eva.

"You speak French, do you not?" she asked, and on learning that she did expressed satisfaction, as she felt herself much more at ease in that language.

"Miss Blackford is going to study with Cavalier," remarked the English girl.

"Ah? Professionally?"

"Oh, no," said Eva; "merely as a pastime."

"You like it?"

"I adore it."

During this short colloquy their eyes had held each other, and the singer's had changed shape, narrowing and elongating with critical reflection. It was not the conventional analysis of social criticism, but the interested and comprehending scrutiny of a brain educated in the realities of life. In spite of herself, Eva felt drawn to the woman. The very fact that her power over Winstanley could be traced to none of the recognized traits of feminine fascination absorbed and puzzled her. She felt her charm without being able to define it. She was the perfection of personal cleanliness, her surroundings were bewitching, but she bore the indelible stamp of low birth, and showed in every movement a woman of educated rather than innate refinement, even of the senses.

After a few more questions she gave Eva some good advice about voice culture—important points that she would probably not have acquired in less than two years' study with the average teacher; she even asked her to come again, after seeing Cavalier, and tell her his opinion of her voice.

"You have one, that is certain," she said. "Every healthful woman, who is neither morally nor physically stunted, has a voice; only some lack the necessary intelligence, others the right quality of heart and soul vibration. It doesn't matter to what heights we leap or to what depths we sink, Miss Blackwell, that vibration must be there if we wish to succeed in *anything*. It is the magic oil that lubricates the wheels of life." As she spoke, she touched an electric bell near her bed.

"Margarete," she said to the maid, "I want rice for dinner; and tell her to be careful to have it dry as—as—well, dry; you understand?"

"Yes, madame."

On returning home Eva tried to define to herself the impression left

upon her by this woman; but it was intangible, inexplicable. She was interested, even charmed, but why? In describing her, what quality could she cite in explanation? Frankness, perhaps; but so many people are frank nowadays!

She tried to put herself in Winstanley's place, to ascertain just how she had acquired her power over him. But now, away from her, with the unlovely face, the thin, nervous hands and bony shoulders more present than the spell of the woman's personal atmosphere, she could not comprehend it.

The futility of trying to think it out alone wearied her. Her surroundings seemed to accentuate a lacking and a weakness in herself. She felt some unfamiliar fact hovering over her, and grew impatient to grasp and understand it, to talk to someone, to get beyond the limits of herself. Then she sent for Hamilton to take her out.

They went to Ritz to dine, and later had coffee served them in a cozy private room with deep chairs and an open fire. Hamilton was decorously attentive. He concealed the frantic pleasure of having her thus to himself, as he concealed the reproaches that had been seething in his heart during their separation. Unrequited love makes one so keenly alive to all the passing whims and moods of the being loved that there is a certain satisfaction to be derived from studiously striving to avoid jarring them. Being wise enough to realize how little his feelings could interest her, he sought merely to amuse and enliven.

As Eva sipped her coffee she suddenly asked: "Do you know whom I went to see today?"

"No; whom?"

"Adelaide Fulton."

Hamilton's eyes opened; he observed her wonderingly.

"How did you go to see her?"

"A co-pensionnaire took me to her house. We had a long talk; she has asked me to come again."

She looked into her cup briefly, drank the contents and set it down.

A soft light came into the man's eyes.

"What do you think of her?" he asked, adopting her easy tone.

"Think? I think her unique. She was a shock, but there is a fascination. What it is I can't grasp."

"I must say I fail to see it, except her voice. That is splendid."

"Have you ever talked with her?"

"Yes."

"Alone?"

"No; but I have heard her talk to—people. I think I have seen her at times at her best. All I can say is that she is refreshing because unusual, and her naturalness startles one to interest, after the familiar type of approved society."

"No; I don't think it is that. In the first place, there are many original characters to be met with in New York drawing-rooms. Originality is the ruling pose of the hour."

"Yes, and society is therefore a collection of studied caricatures! Education has destroyed real individuality, and instead we are all miserably struggling to realize the popular ideal."

"That is just it! This is the reason we pall so—the effort and study are too great; this everlasting living according to published theories or 'fashion'! The broadcast familiarity with wise maxims created for the few, and now adopted by all, is largely responsible for the loss of individuality; this compiling the wisdom of real thinkers, the deductions arrived at through serious and reliable experience, and making of it a sort of ready-made-character stuff that is sold off at so much a column, and made into overalls for every Tom, Dick and Harry! Women who would be interesting in their natural shyness assume a frankness that slaps one in the face at every turn; the vivacious nature, whose impulsiveness would be a relief, struggles to appear like still waters running deep; the spoiled beauty, whose natural selfishness cannot be concealed, apes generosity, until, in a vital moment, the real woman

crops out and is a shock to the man she has married, who hates selfishness; whereas another man might have loved the real woman for her very faults, and, being rightly mated, the faults would have been toned down, or— Can you see what I mean?"

"Perfectly. To me this is the curse of the age. We never know what we are shaking hands with or whom we are marrying."

Eva was now leaning forward, her chin in her hands.

"I have been thinking it all over," she said, watching the flame lick into blue excitement about the logs. "Yet even such reasoning does not explain Adelaide Fulton's charm. There is something more—something deeper than our fullest understanding of life."

"She has made a great study of man—I don't mean deliberately!" Then, as he caught Eva's little gesture of disagreement, "Since her earliest womanhood she has been associated with them in every way till, like the practiced pianist, whose fingers find the most intricate chords instinctively, she strikes the right notes upon whatever instrument she essays to play."

Eva sat thinking. He watched the pale profile with the soft firelight upon it; the pensive fall and rise of the lashes told him she was absorbed in reflections wherein he figured not at all, and it caused him an irritation so poignant that he almost longed to get away from her.

He stretched his legs impatiently, and the movement roused her.

"There is a good deal in that!" she said; "and yet, why should not the unwearying study of one man lead to the same result, so far as that one man is concerned?"

His impulse was to say, "Oh, damn it all! I don't know," for he knew she was but making use of him. Instead, he let his head fall in his hands, and sat silent.

"There is the contradiction of your theory," she added. "You can say nothing?" She glanced at him ap-

pealingly, anxious for some retort that might help her to beat the matter out.

"Oh, it's different!" he ventured, revealing a little his distaste for the argument.

She leaned back in her chair and regarded his wide shoulders with dissatisfaction. After a moment she sat up and said quietly: "I must go now."

Hamilton jerked about. "Go? Why, it's not ten o'clock!"

"I know, but you are not in a mood to interest me tonight."

"How? Why? Good heavens! What do you want me to do?"

"Nothing; only take me back."

As she rose he followed her, the blood rushing hot to his temples with dread of losing her, of having this sweet solitude with her so abruptly curtailed.

"Don't do this," he pleaded; "I am in a mood for—anything you like. Jove! what did I do? Oh, I say, don't break up our chat like this! What did I do?"

There was something almost boyish in his remorseful eagerness and anxious searching for the right thing to say, a boyishness with which she had no patience. In his eyes was a burning warmth that irritated her, as the love a woman cannot return always irritates. His very largeness and good looks, the sense of his masculinity, the knowledge that his deepest nature was centered upon her, making unspoken demands, craving what belonged to another, what she never wished to withdraw from that other, made her wish to be rid of him.

"Oh, don't tire me!" she said fretfully. "Get my wraps and come, or—let me go alone."

He put his hands in his pockets and looked at her in troubled perplexity.

"Where are they?" she asked, glancing about the room.

"I'll ring for them, but—" He walked slowly to the fire and threw his cigarette in.

"Please do," she said.

"It is so jolly here. You'll be lonely there. Oh, stay on a bit; we'll

talk things out. Do it for charity. I'm—bored; not a dog to speak to here, not a——"

"Oh, don't try to appeal to my generosity, for I haven't any. If I were to remain it would be for my own sake, because I dread being alone, because I want to talk to someone. As a rule you enter into things with some zest; but tonight——"

"Oh, I shall! Listen—you don't understand me. I was thinking. A man can't talk off like a book. I'm no fledgling, you know. I've had my hours of reflection. Do you want me to answer you like a schoolboy—a copy-book?"

"You know what I want. I want you to give the subject we discuss your attention, not me."

"I know, and I was doing so; for——"

"You were not! Don't treat me like a child."

"My thoughts wandered but an instant. The subject is as attractive to me as to you. It's a thing I have always wanted to discuss with someone interested; I don't think you could have found me in a mood more suitable for it."

Eva was looking through him and thinking. "Listen," she said; "if I remain I want to tell you, once for all, that our association must always be in the abstract. It interests me to talk to you merely as a means of unburdening myself and helping me to reach conclusions. It seems to me unfair to you, but—I am not considering others just now. If you are wise you will let me leave you now, and you will return to England or America."

Hamilton took a fresh cigarette. "It's all in a lifetime," he said in an undertone, as he rolled it. "What does it matter to what it leads?" He lighted the cigarette, inhaled a volume of smoke and looked at the ceiling while breathing it out. His voice was not so steady as he added: "To me the hour counts, not the future. I'd rather spend one week in the open field of battle, and drop on the seventh day to the touch of a bullet, than shut

myself in some place of security for a lifetime, eating my heart out."

"That is not the only alternative," said Eva, returning to her chair. "Remember, the world is wide and women many."

"Yes, too many!" he replied, with a little laugh born of his delight in seeing her again installed near him.

Eva sank back languidly. "And the world often too wide!" she said reflectively.

"If it were only the size of this room!"

Immediately he regretted the words that had escaped him impulsively, and to efface them before she could comment or move he leaned over and dug the fire. "What a beastly poor affair, this fire! Reminds me of the conflagrations we used to cook our grub on in South Africa on a rainy night. There, that's better, isn't it, eh?" He looked at her critically, wondering if she had noticed his first remark.

Her satisfaction in being there with the privilege of giving voice to thoughts just as they came to her, and having them met and replied to by a capable intellect, was too great to permit her to heed the slip. She pretended to be absorbed in thought.

"I want you to tell me something truthfully," she said presently; and Hamilton, relieved and happy again, listened with all attention, forgetting everything but that she was there beside him, inclosed in that little space with at least two hours before them. "This social disguise, this moral straining and effort, is it as distinctly a part of me as it is of the rest?"

In recognizing the question to be wholly out of keeping with her nature, Hamilton felt the responsibility of his reply, knowing that if he laughed her mistake would be brought home to her. He deliberated while flicking ashes into the fire.

"With you it is a coat you adopt at will," he said, "a domino you assume when among dominos. The self you reveal to intimates is entirely devoid of it."

Eva was thoughtful. "With intimates? With you, perhaps, but——"

He did not help her; in that moment all his elation died. His position toward her seemed to stand out with more distinctness; he remembered the words she had spoken a few moments before, and though they had told him nothing new, the sense of being coldly and indifferently used as an instrument to aid in dissecting her fault in relation to Winstanley lowered his courage. He felt unable at once to rise above the deadly depression that had settled upon him, and, dreading another direct question, he left his seat.

"May I indulge in a whisky-and-soda?" he asked, approaching the bell. "Do you mind?"

"Not in the least; why should I?"

Then, when he was again seated, she added: "It doesn't appear that we are the least bit nearer solving the problem we started out with than we were when we began."

"No; do you think we can ever solve it?"

"Not unless you give it more thought."

The servant came to the door; Hamilton gave his order, and sat waiting. Eva was waiting, too, or, rather, wondering if he were going to help her. But, after all, wasn't it a subterfuge to wait? Why not ask him deliberately why he did not help? But what charm would there be in such crudeness? The veriest Hottentot might indulge in that.

"There must be a certain finesse," she said, obeying her thoughts. "It is nonsense to say it is attractive for one to turn oneself inside out for the observation of every eye."

"Every eye, no," returned Hamilton, making a place on a little table for the siphon and whisky now brought and inwardly quaking with the knowledge that he was not the least in a mood to discuss metaphysics, though he looked to the whisky to help him.

When the servant had departed Eva said: "Let us return to our muttons! We were discussing Adelaide Fulton's charm. I shall display my vast fund of frankness by stating at

once that I am particularly interested in dissecting it; nor am I ashamed to acknowledge this, because I am obliged to recognize her charm to be real, though inexplicable."

Hamilton drank the contents of his glass, then leaned forward to watch the fire. He knew he would be wiser to reflect than to speak hastily and perhaps miss the mark. But try as he might his brain would not lend itself to the subject in question. One thought was always uppermost, persistent and absorbing: why did she cling so tenaciously to the memory of one who had shown himself both selfish and inappreciative—a man who had insulted her by the preference he took no pains to hide, who was as unworthy of her as——?

"Are you thinking of what I said?" she asked, looking at him critically.

"Of course I am! It is a subject for thought. I have often pondered over it." His tongue began to loosen; he was gradually getting himself under control. "There have been women who in my collected moments I despised, whose appearance, characteristics and ideas revolted me when I was away from them, and yet in whose presence I was as helpless as a feather in a windstorm."

"Ah, but that is another sort of thing! Everyone recognizes there is animal magnetism."

"Yes; but there was one who was physically repulsive to me, who nevertheless swayed me while I was with her. In thinking it over I traced it to a certain quick intelligence, a sort of intuitive understanding of me! My smallest impulse, my labored and floundering sentences, she grasped and comprehended at once; she knew——"

"Ah, that is more Adelaide Fulton's power!—the quick intelligence."

"Why not call it good training, and revert to my snubbed suggestion concerning her knowledge of men?"

"Because it is not a deliberate utilization of training. I can't accept that. An intelligence quickened by experience, yes; but there is something finer

back of her influence than the methodical use of that knowledge." After a short silence she said, partly in soliloquy: "The vanity of the one desired stands largely for or against our chances of winning; that is why a quick intelligence forms the foundation of elective affinity. The instinct of the woman flatters the vanity of the man, and starts the flame that unites them; and yet"—she looked at him critically—"I have never flattered."

In meeting his eyes she recognized her mistake, the unfeelingness of the blunder she was about to make. The color fled quickly from his face, but she leaned over to throw into the fire a match he had dropped, saying quite easily: "That doesn't explain it, either. There are different sorts of attraction between the sexes; and what we call love is not the strongest, though it is the most natural. Cleopatra's influence over Antony was not the effect of love, any more than was Napoleon's influence over his soldiers, or—Well, what do you think?"

Hamilton lighted a cigarette. "I was listening," he said calmly.

"I know, but I don't want you to listen; I want you to talk. Tell me what you think; I know what I think, and I've had enough of it."

"You mean about——?"

"Oh, nothing! It is uphill work. We are no farther than when we began. . . . You were much more interested in things during the voyage than you are now. Has Paris blunted your ideas?"

"Perhaps. But remember you did not ply me with the deepest of moral problems during the voyage."

Eva laughed. "I know; what nonsense I am talking! Do you know, I begin to think I am only half developed! I believe most men and women die undeveloped. There is an inner identity we never probe to the core; we use it as a dummy on which to hang our self-created egos!"

Hamilton was relieved by the change of mood, and in sheer gladness echoed her laugh. "What a second-hand clothing shop we shall look like, then,

at the Day of Judgment!" he exclaimed.

Eva was still laughing, her head thrown back, her half-closed eyes catching dancing lights from the fire. "What a surprise show to our fellows who knew us always white, and then see us black!"

"Well, the worst of us will serve the future this much—we will give the dull people in heaven something to remember and gossip about while we are frizzling."

"Do you think you will frizzle?"

"Oh, without a doubt, if we are to be judged according to the Scriptures."

"The Scriptures—yes!" Then, after a short silence: "Think of that life going on in New York—the same endless succession of aimless gaiety, the same women growing old in an effort to rival one another."

"The same children maturing to another era of madness! After all, it's a gay madness, instead of a stupid one, like breaking stones in the road, or——"

"Did you tell me you had been ten years in the States?"

"Yes, ten long years, and not easy ones, either."

"Well, why in the world did one never hear of you?"

"Because I belonged to the America you society folk know nothing of; I was ranching."

"Ranching! What for?"

"Bread and sausage. Being a second son, I had to knock up against it until four years ago, when my brother died."

"And you rose up from the ashes a glorious phoenix, with title and estates? Was the—metamorphosis unalloyed?"

"Yes; I hardly knew him; and he never wanted to know me."

After a moment, "I don't think there is much family affection among the English, is there?"

Hamilton's face softened. "I don't know," he said, looking pensively into the fire. "There was one member of my family I loved better than myself. Then, I loved my parents,

though I knew them such a short time."

"Who is the member?"

"My sister."

In the abrupt utterance there was contained a warmth and softness that he had never revealed before, and Eva was briefly interested and curious.

"I never knew you had a sister," she said.

"I haven't now. She died two years ago—just when I got her home, and she might have known happiness for the first time in her poor life."

"Wasn't your brother good to her?"

"Good! She bored him, probably. She was noble, but not pretty; too high-strung to endure the dependence she was made to feel. She took a false step, and he let her slip down."

He leaned forward to the fire, his hands pressed together, a line, that came only in moments of intense feeling, cutting his brow. "It took me two years to find her; she had drifted to Canada. I worked my way there and persuaded her to come with me to the ranch. On the way she escaped me, leaving a note to say she would kill herself if I followed. She had got a place on the variety stage. It was only pluck and pride. She didn't want to be a weight on me when I'd nothing, but I'd— Well, she's one of the good ones gone!"

"And your brother was a millionaire?"

"He became one, yes. Married money and accumulated it."

"No children? That was a good turn of luck for you."

"Yes, but it came too late for her!"

The fire crackled against silence for a few moments. Eva looked reflectively at him, as he leaned forward with elbows on knees. He had never appeared so human to her, nor so alive with good, substantial manliness.

"Why don't you marry?" she said.

He sat perfectly still, although the question startled him; then, sitting back, he blew a long whiff of smoke.

"Oh, I don't know."

"You should, you know. You

would make some woman very happy, for you've had the right training." She arose as she spoke, because the situation had assumed a certain confidential comfortableness that she began to be conscious of, and the real, cold misery of her own life stood out with sudden distinctness in comparison.

He sprang to his feet, his face blank with disappointment.

"You are going so soon?"

"Yes; it is late."

He looked at his watch. "Only fifteen after eleven."

"That is late enough; and I am decided."

V

EVA saw Adelaide Fulton several times during the following weeks, and she allowed Hamilton to take her out now and again, when the routine of lessons and sightseeing with Miss Wallace became unendurable without some break.

She realized that this spasmodic association with a man already in love with her was but sinking him more hopelessly in the entanglement from which he had refused to extricate himself. She suffered no self-reproach. She herself was floundering against difficult tides in an unknown sea, aiming for a goal she could not so much as name and dared not attempt to comprehend. He helped her to breathe above the level of her misery, to watch the horizon for something, she knew not what. There was even a sort of wicked satisfaction in knowing she could hurt him. *She* had been hurt, crushed, shattered, when innocent of any wrong but too great love; why should she consider others?

Her voice was the only pleasure these days contained for her. It was rapidly developing into something to be proud of, something that gave her hope—of what?

He might hear it some time! He should hear it! And then—it should be brought to a perfect state, obedient to her feelings as a bow to the will of

a practiced hand! . . . Why had her love left no impression upon him? She had lived for him, breathed for him since the hour he had first taught her to love him. She had borne him a son; and he had been absent eight months when the child died. He had written beautiful letters to assuage her loss; but the bereavement had been hers alone!

Why did she love him? . . . Did she love him? *She hated him!* And yet—There was something wrong, something lacking in her, or the tragedy would never have occurred. He had needed something she was unable to give, and he had found this in another!

In cool-headed, unbiased reasoning could she blame him? Would she not have been more miserable had he remained, in obedience to some conventional idea of loyalty, and suffered her to be a patiently endured burden on his life? No! This was better, much better.

She was sitting as she often sat of late, alone in her private sitting-room. The fire had burned itself to gray ashes through which a rosy glow showed dimly. Winstanley seemed very near her this evening; he was part of her again, real, familiar, intimate, stirring anew that sense of completeness which wedded life with the being one loves alone can create. It was as though a paralyzed limb were returning to life and warmth, and she had reveled in this sensation until the truth returned, and thought, and coldness again.

Had he been less independent in his desertion of her, had he not written her those strong, yet pitilessly honest letters when their child died, she could have given him up more easily.

He had never posed as anything but what he was. In the very beginning she had recognized that the calm affection he had given her with his name was not rooted in the strange, deep soul that shone at times in his eyes, and made him appear so very incongruous with the world they lived in. She had worked and struggled to reach that depth, as a novice diver

struggles for a treasure at the ocean's bed, and her efforts, futile and hampered by inexperienced love, had only disturbed the water and rendered the task more difficult. She realized this now; she also understood that she lacked some essential quality that might have enabled her to be in touch with his deeper nature. Hamilton had said to her, a night or two before, that the woman or man who could not arouse a full return of love from any certain being had been misled by chance to love the wrong individual. She had scoffed at the idea, and harked back to her old theory that it was owing to insufficient development in the one who could not obtain a full return. "Any love could be mutually perfect," she had said, "if each could be fully developed to the other. The same law holds in it as in all nature. The bud of a flower will come to nothing if each little receptacle for every petal is not sufficiently developed to hold the petal as it unfolds. Love, in its right sense, its most complete sense, is a perfect adjustment of two individuals; every petal of one must find a receptacle in the other."

Now the thought returned to her. Adelaide Fulton had told her she did not believe in mutual love. Her theory was that nature intended woman to attract, but not to love. She considered it unfeminine for women to experience any but maternal love; that love of man, when it rose above mere passion, was as instinctively revolting to a man as mawkish affection from a man is to a woman. She had said, "Man's natural obligation toward woman is to give, woman's toward man to take. In their hearts men prefer loving to being loved, which is a proof of the natural law."

The more Eva thought it over the more the idea took possession of her. She recalled many instances where wives, learning to love husbands they had accepted indifferently, gradually lost the devotion they had come to depend upon. . . . After all, it was a natural law for the male to give; in humanity the law was per-

verted! Women had overstepped. But what was there left if to love were to be denied? Hamilton loved her, yet it gave her no pleasure. The argument was feeble and faulty somewhere.

As a relief, she went to the piano and played through a bar or two of music open on the rack. It was Bohm's "Still Wie die Nacht," a favorite song and one that particularly suited her voice. On reaching the end of the page she went back and sang it softly, then, bursting into full voice, poured out all the pain that was drowning her heart.

When it was finished her head fell forward on her hands. "I can't give him up and live!" she said half aloud. Then a voice within her whispered, "But you have given him up! He is gone. You have as little claim upon him as the uttermost stranger!"

There was a knock; it quickly congealed the mood. A swift and unreasoning anger made her hurry to the door. The Californian, arrayed in a magenta bodice, with yellow lace, her long nose accentuated with powder, stood there smiling with a self-satisfied surety of having something to say that would make her welcome.

"That was *grand!*" she exclaimed. "I just couldn't sit still till I came in to tell you. It was fine. I tell you, if they had a few voices like yours at the opera they might talk! Why——"

Eva was so taken aback that she could not speak at once, but as the woman made a movement to enter she said, with some asperity:

"It is very good of you, but—you can't come in now. I never receive people in my room."

The Californian stared, and her face hardened. "Oh, I wasn't a-going to force my way. I never do that. I just wanted—but excuse me for troubling you."

Without the slightest qualm of regret for the woman's discomfort Eva closed the door, as she moved away, and locked it. Then, with teeth set, she stood in the middle of the room. Had a man insulted her, or

the whole community in which she lived in New York risen up to defame her, she could not have experienced a moment of more intense hatred of the world. This visit had affected her as a flame would affect a stored magazine. She longed to vent rage on someone, because there was no other outlet possible. She could neither seek solace nor resign herself openly to her grief; pride forbade this; and thus suppressed it was bound to develop with time into a mental disease, since her physical condition was too strong to break under it. There are many situations in life where a delicate physique is a boon.

The next morning she went to see Adelaide Fulton. The singer was engaged with someone in the drawing-room, and sent word for Eva to wait in her bedroom.

She came in a few moments, her arms full of flowers—long branches of apple blossoms, and lilac sent in moist cotton from Nice, and heaps of Italian violets. She was singing softly as she entered, but her face did not express a happy mood. She looked haggard and older than Eva had ever seen her. The eyes were lightless, the skin dry and lined. She laid the flowers on the bed, then threw two great bunches of violets into Eva's lap.

"The salute of spring!" she said, and without other welcome turned to her toilet-table and took the combs from her hair.

The thought that she was possibly not welcome crossed Eva's mind vaguely, but did not trouble her. She never felt toward this woman as toward a person, but as a being entirely outside of the conventional world. She neither hated nor liked her, but found an inexplicable satisfaction in being with her, a satisfaction resembling that which one feels in examining some painful excrescence that is mysteriously devouring one's vitality.

She took up some of the violets and breathed them. Miss Fulton shook out her short, oxygenized hair and began to comb it.

"Why have you come today?" she asked presently.

"No particular reason. If you want me to go, say so."

"I don't want you to go."

She arranged her hair cleverly, with deft fingers, and returned the three handsome amber combs to their places. Then, with a hand-mirror, she went nearer the window, and rapidly reddened her lips with carmine salve and powdered her face to an interesting pallor. In fastening the collar of her bodice she stood in front of Eva, regarding her curiously.

"You are the only woman I could tolerate about me today," she said, "and yet why I don't know. Do you like me at all?"

Eva had not lifted her face from the violets. "I never thought about it," she replied.

The other sat down to put on her boots. "I don't think it is curiosity that brings you to see me," she said. "You never try to sneak into my inner life, as the others do." Then she went on, in a seemingly irrelevant way: "There is only one thing I envy the conventionally correct woman, and that is the flavor law gives to life. I used to scoff at conventionalities, but now I recognize their importance, which is so seldom understood by those who slavishly obey them."

She arose when the boots were finished and put the buttonhook on the table with a bang. "Laws—the narrowest laws, the stupidest conventionalities—are the greatest boon civilized intelligence has yet bestowed on human life. And it is not remorse that prevents the conventionally lawless from being happy. The laws of nature are far stronger than man's, and her greatest law is the prohibition of happiness. Where do you ever see a semblance of it, except in human life that is tied down by limitations? Happiness, after all, is a cultivated emotion, a thing born of restrictions. I often wonder if a bird doesn't enjoy the beauties of the world much more when viewing them through the bars of a cage than when they were freely his

by nature, like his feathers and wings. Did you ever see an animal, or even an uncivilized human being, look really happy? Watch the hunting, hungry anxiety of butterflies and birds; the troubled, dull eyes of free animals; the— But, *mon Dieu!* why all this talk? You always start me upon harangues! I must go to the theatre a moment; I suppose you—wouldn't care to come?"

Eva noticed the slight hesitation, and was uncertain how best to conceal the fact that she was conscious of it. She spoke quickly.

"Do you want me? I should like it very much."

"*Bien!* We might spin through the Bois a little, afterward, if you like. The carriage is closed."

Eva's impulse was to ask what advantage there was in the fact of its being closed, but was deterred by her knowledge of the woman's quick insight. Instead she said: "I'm afraid you will not find me interesting. I haven't an idea, and life is an ugly gray to me today."

"Perhaps that is why the thought of having you appeals to me; we shall be harmonious at least." As she pinned a beautiful flat hat low over her nose and drew a white veil tight about it, she said, still looking into the mirror: "Tell me something; were you ever happy?"

There was a slight delay before the answer came: "Yes; once."

"Really happy?"

"Yes, as happy as I should ever want to be."

Miss Fulton was having some difficulty in adjusting the veil. When it was arranged she threw a stole of white fox over her shoulders and looked thoughtfully at Eva. "I often wonder why you are not married," she said. "You are not the sort of woman to be single."

As Eva rose and leaned down to look at a photograph on the table, she still watched her; then, turning abruptly toward the door, exclaimed: "*Al-lons!* I must be off!"

In the coupé she said: "I wish I

could believe I had ever been happy or ever was likely to be."

"Perhaps your ideal of happiness has grown out of proportion with possibilities; I mean you have always had so much of the sort of thing that interests and delights you that only something extraordinary could now awaken sensation."

"I'm afraid that doesn't explain it. Certainly I now prefer this sort of life to any other; but why? Because once in it one can never shake it off. In the beginning I hated it; I should have been happy to have settled down, as other girls at home did. . . . The hour I most nearly approached happiness was the night of my debut and success here; it was the first moment I took real interest in my work. Since then I have been fighting tides from every direction and of every sort. I have been gorged with excitement, yes; but I have known no happiness—lived on champagne, and starved for wholesome food, so that now I dread the future and distrust the present. . . . Today, for instance, I should feel something like happiness; instead I want to blow my brains out!"

Eva glanced at her and saw that the words were not spoken with any desire for dramatic effect. There was a dullness in the eyes and a droop to the lips that, although frequently discernible in moments of abstraction, gave serious significance to the utterance.

"I am afraid that unreasoning desire to die is always caused by some physical disorder," she said. "I have had it; but a walk in the sunlight cures me."

"Yes, of course. Everything can be reduced to the flesh in the long run; but it originates in the soul or mind—where you will. You have had troubles, no doubt; one can see that, but at least you still retain a normal view of life. It is not all contorted, drowned in an overdeveloped consciousness of yourself; the wall of selfishness has not grown up about you, blocking all the world out, as it has about me."

"Selfishness?"

"Yes; there is no other word! My

life has made it necessary for me to consider only myself, to depend upon my wit, my inner strength, until it has outgrown everything else, until I have become like a gladiator, accumulating strength and finding my only pleasure in the excitement of overcoming others, never in yielding to them. What is my existence? An endless effort, some excitement, very little real pleasure and no peace! I could not tolerate peace, and yet I often crave it so strongly that at times I would most willingly die. Yet it has been often in my power to have peace—peace and plenty—even more.”

Eva's heart began to beat swiftly; a question was upon her lips, and without considering she spoke it. “Would you not be happier if—if you married?”

“That is just it! Would marriage better my condition? No! The sense of belonging to someone would drive me to madness; I should make the man miserable, and—I shouldn't care to do that to him.”

“Him?”

“I once really loved, when I was—*jeune fille*. His people wouldn't have it, and—I was bought off. It would have been a great match for me; we might have been happy. But *le père* millionaire does not consider the woman; let *her* go to the devil as quickly as possible, so long as the son is safe from her! . . . Well, he has come back to me, with all the paternal millions; he would marry me even now.”

Eva was looking out of the window; she could feel that the blood had left her face, and dreaded to have it seen. She put her head out and looked down the street, as though interested in something they had passed.

“He will be here tomorrow,” continued Miss Fulton, in the same absorbed way, “and I almost dread it, although—”

“God! Did you—did you see?”

Eva sank back and covered her face with her hands.

“What?” asked the singer, leaning over her quickly.

“A—woman—nearly run over!”

“Oh, la! la! What of that? She

wasn't, so where's the harm? They are forever walking under the wheels! How things affect you! I should never have thought—*Dieu!* You are white and trembling, as though the thing had really happened.”

“It was—so near!” said Eva, brushing her hand across her brow and trying to calm herself.

Adelaide looked at her reflectively, and the other felt that look penetrating to the ache within her. She longed to escape from her at once; she sensed a triumphant and cruel deliberation in the woman's regard, a sudden fierce antagonism maturing between them. She could not meet her eyes, could not look at her. Her very proximity seemed to burn her, fretting all the sensitive fibres of her being, which, in that moment, seemed to be rawly exposed to every passing impression. She would quickly know everything, and pity her—pity her for—

“You have not a strong heart, have you?” asked Adelaide more gently.

“No,” she replied, grasping at the straw. “Sudden—I can't stand anything like an accident—blood, death, screams and things!”

“But there wasn't anything.”

“I know, but—there might have been!”

The long eyes looked at her softly. “Well, here we are!” as the vehicle drew up at the stage door. “I shall give you a drop of cognac; that will set you up.”

“Thanks, no. If you don't mind, I shall await you here. I shall be calm in a few moments.”

“Here in the carriage?”

“Yes, please; it will be better. This—I'm ashamed of myself!”

“Oh, nonsense! There was a time when I was the same. If I heard of a cat being run over I would go to bed and have my legs twitching so I'd have to have them rubbed. . . . I may be half an hour.”

“Very well; the longer the better.”

Adelaide descended with an amused laugh. “*Merci bien! vous êtes gentille!*”

"Oh, I mean—it will give me time to control myself. This is such folly."

"I understand. You will not be bored?"

"Not in the least."

When she moved away, singing lightly, Eva sank into the corner of the seat. She was conscious then of the stony coldness of her entire body, of a weight on her mind and heart that made it impossible to think. He was coming; he would be with this woman! He would enter that little apartment familiarly and lovingly! That was as far as she could get. No other thought took shape, although one strong desire possessed her—to get away; to be alone; to be free of the singer's atmosphere. She dreaded her return, and yet how escape it without rousing suspicion?

As the moments passed she grew hot and cold with terror of her coming; she sat huddled there, hating her surroundings, the little familiar handbag lying beside her; the hand-embroidered handkerchief; the carved ivory mirror; the tick of the handsome carriage clock. All seemed permeated with the singer's personality and to speak of hours passed with Winstanley, hours wherein she had never figured, as she sat at home pondering and suffering.

More distinctly than it had appeared to her since their separation her husband's profile stood out, clear cut and colorless, against the other window. She felt him there beside her, waiting for and thinking of Adelaide; and swiftly there returned the impression of one ecstatic hour with him, when she had felt his being responding to the warmth in her; when, for a brief space, she had felt him hers, all in all, absorbed—alive in her!

The blood rushed to her brain; a frantic impulse seized her. Some action was necessary—something, she cared not what.

She started up; then, in fear of betraying herself to the other, took Adelaide's note-pad from the rack and wrote carefully:

That fright has made me feel so ill, I have decided to go back. I was not feeling quite up to the mark today; I should only bore you in this condition, so shall doctor myself a little. I hope you will understand.

She laid the pad on the seat and left the carriage. There were several cabs at the corner; she beckoned to one and had herself driven to the Bois.

It was a relief to sit in that little compartment alone, with the whole world shut out. The slow movement on rubber tires soothed her. She sank into the corner and prepared herself to think out what she was to do—what had happened. But her excitement suddenly waned; she was aware only of a great satisfaction in being alone, a delicious gratitude toward conditions that made it possible thus to cut herself off from everyone. She found herself watching other vehicles passing, and, deciding that this distracted her from thinking, pulled down the blue blinds and sat in restful darkness. Even then she could not focus her mind upon the subject weighing at her heart. She looked at the situation squarely; it was real and significant to her as a thing apart, but in relation to herself she could not grasp it.

That he was coming to Paris to be with Adelaide Fulton she realized, and looked upon the fact as she might have looked upon his dead face, feeling a mysterious distance between them; but try as she would she could get no farther.

After two hours of unprogressive brooding the cab came to a standstill.

She moved, and her bones ached from the cramp of one position; her hands lay heavy and cold in her lap.

On raising the blinds she saw it was already dark; the coachman was lighting his lamps. Several carriages passed by all alight. Above, the naked branches of trees showed they were still in the Park. As she sat wondering what she should do, the man came to the door and said: "*Est-ce que c'est assez du Bois, madame?*"

Put thus to the task, her thoughts

leaped. "Yes; take me to the Elysées Hôtel," she replied.

VI

HAMILTON had passed a restless day. He had had a bad dream about Eva, and was possessed with the idea that she was ill or in trouble. He had remained indoors hoping for some word from her, and late in the afternoon had sent a note. The messenger returned to say that Eva was out. Twice again he had sent to her, always with the same result—she had not yet come in.

As it was dark when the last note was despatched, his foreboding increased. He thought of the fixed pain he had seen so often in her eyes; the reckless false gaiety with which she had tried to rise above a sorrow she was too proud to express. It gave him a poignant pang to remember her courageous calm in discussing subjects he knew were shaking her inmost being; the hungry yearning with which she sought by argument to obtain solace for a bereavement more pitiless than death—for in death the one she loved would have been more hers. In his sympathy there was no room for jealousy; in fact, had he been able to dissect his feelings, he would have found that he loved her first for this very love that was dividing them. In it the real woman was divulged; through it he looked into her inmost nature, the nature a woman reveals only to her husband. His love tempted her confidence; and her love of the other, suffering and humiliated as it was, made her yield recklessly and deliberately to the temptation to let him serve her. He understood this; he saw that she was pitilessly using him, that what he might suffer through the intercourse meant nothing to her, and he realized that he was likely to suffer, that at any moment she might send him from her favor. The fact that she had made no attempt to conceal from him the true state of affairs only increased her influence upon him, an influence that was not so much a power

as a controlling sympathy of being, an accordance that made him keenly alive to the nature he already understood more than Winstanley had done during their years of association.

With her husband this nature had been engulfed in her wish to please; it had never asserted itself. In her desire for his love she had studied to be what she thought might appeal to him, and, realizing that she did not hold his love, had deemed herself undeserving of it, and consequently struggled to be something that she was not, which is always a vital mistake; for the fool who can love a woman's disguise is not worthy of the effort, and a man or woman of real stability can give love only to a being equally stable and real.

Hamilton loved her without judgment, almost without passion. He loved the troubled, anxious woman, even the selfishness that made her so indifferent to his love. As he sat in his room, upon an uncomfortable upright chair, hugging one foot and pulling at the pipe that had scarcely been out of his mouth the whole day, he thought much about Winstanley. He did not hate him, being more puzzled than vindictive; and he could not understand how Winstanley could have married Eva, not realizing that in her he knew a woman entirely different from the one who had been his friend's wife. He had gradually come to look upon Winstanley as a man of degenerate character, controlled by unbalanced impulses, by—

A knock interrupted his meditation, and his heart leaped so fiercely with a thought of Eva that it carried the color from his face.

The man handed him one of her cards on which was written:

I am waiting in a cab at the main doorway. I want you to come with me.

He was with her in less than five minutes.

"Is there some quiet place where we can dine?" she asked as he got in; "some unpretentious place, where the atmosphere is calm—no music."

He gave the order and pulled the door to. This sudden gratification of

the desire that had driven him almost frantic for several days left him no strength to speak. He felt her largely beside him; the very air seemed pervaded with her. He seemed to breathe her, to be absorbing her through every sense. He felt small, helpless and inarticulate. All the force of character he might have exercised with a woman he knew to be even a little in sympathy with him was perforce held in subjection. He was grateful for the crumbs, since he had been made to understand he might expect no more. Of late his desire for even the crumbs had become so intense that he was overcome by her mere presence.

They rolled down the lighted avenue in silence. Bells jingled on every side, vehicles passed to and fro, the cab creaked, and once, crossing the Avenue de l'Alma, it jolted on the tracks and her arm, touching his, thrilled him.

"Listen," she said quietly; "I don't want you to leave me this whole evening. I shall not go back to the *pension* until late. I feel as if I should go mad there, and—I don't want to be alone. You will not leave me?"

"No."

He longed to take her hand; to draw her to him as a brother might; to have her lay her white face upon his shoulder; to have her sob out the grief he knew was choking her, that left her no words, no courage even to weep. He was not curious to know the reason of the new despair; the knowledge that she was suffering, and that he dared not offer her the slightest word of comfort, absorbed all other consideration. He cursed his own stupidity, his clumsiness, the fact that he was not a woman. A woman would know how to soothe her, how to take the poison from her ache.

As the cab stopped Eva sat up. "What is this?" she asked, looking nervously through the window.

"The Café Ritz. We can have a private room." As he opened the door she caught his arm.

"I don't want to eat," she said quickly. "Take me to some place where we can be amused, some place

where there are dancing, feats—trained animals."

He thought an instant before closing the door, then called to the driver to stop at the first news-stand.

"*Est-ce que vous ne descendez pas ici?*" demanded the man. "I can't go on all night. I want my dinner; my horse——"

"Do as I tell you," interrupted Hamilton, with the note of command that sends terror to the heart of Parisian *canaille*, "and be quick."

On procuring a *Figaro* he examined the amusement column and decided upon the Casino as offering an entertainment the most likely to distract Eva.

"What is going on there?" she asked.

"A sort of variety, 'L'Oncle d'Amérique'; rather amusing, some attractive songs."

"Sentimental?"

"No, witty. It is the best thing in Paris just now."

"Have you been there?"

"Yes; two nights ago."

"Did it make you laugh?"

"Yes."

"What do they do? Tell me all about it."

He began, and she interrupted him with the same nervous haste:

"Are there any dogs or birds, or anything?"

"Some monkeys that are really good."

"What do they do?"

"Oh, the usual trapeze work; and one——"

"Monkeys are so human-looking—so hideous! Where are these trained lions one sees advertised everywhere?"

"Would you rather go there?"

"Yes, I *hate* humanity! I couldn't endure dancing and singing and—horseplay."

The new order was given.

"It is a very good show," he said, when they were en route in another direction. "The beasts are fine specimens, and it really is thrilling to see that slight, fragile-looking woman in the midst of them; when one——"

"Is she in the cage with them?"

"They are not in a cage; she brings them openly into the arena. Often they grow fretful and give her threatening looks. The other night——"

"If they attacked her they would be quickly shot, so there is not much risk."

"To shoot twelve lions would take a little time; and when one is aroused——"

"What are those lights moving over there?"

"The Moulin Rouge. Have you never seen it?"

"Not at night. Well, tell me about the—what was it?"

"The lions?"

"Yes."

"They are really fine creatures——"

"Why are they so tame?"

"They are drugged; but there is always the danger of the drug wearing off at unexpected moments——"

"Well, don't tell me that! I shall be expecting something awful to happen. I couldn't stand it tonight. Do you think it is likely anything will happen?"

"No. It has been going on now for four months without any accident."

"Yes, but tonight might be the very exception."

"There is little danger; they run no risks. But would you rather change and do as we first intended?"

"No, I want to see them."

As she became silent Hamilton racked his brains for something to say that might interest her. He felt it would be folly to attempt any witticism; she was not in a mood for laughter, but craved distraction. He thought of a story he had heard the night before of how a man he knew had been blackmailed for a large sum on the ship coming over. He led up to it tactfully, and told it with a graphic smoothness that held her attention until they reached the animal show, and it gave him pleasure to feel that he had diverted her.

The animals also interested her; she

watched them with attention, her eyes following those that evinced the most life. She gave him the impression of being much younger than ever before, although she looked older. There were lines about her mouth and hollows in the cheeks; her eyes were sunken and dull with the dulness of suppressed pain; but despite this there was the inconsequence and self-oblivion of a child, that indefinable ignorance of responsibility, the heedless reliance on others that is a child's natural prerogative. It made him feel even more tenderly toward her, more anxious to indulge her every whim. He watched her, that he might be ready to comply with any change of mood, and, as he watched, his desire to give her more substantial comfort increased. He was aware the instant she became weary and gently suggested leaving, to which she readily agreed.

They drove back to the Café Ritz, where he engaged one of the private dining-rooms. He had had no dinner and had been under a strain the entire day, and he determined to smoke. He asked her if he might as he took out his case.

"Yes, do smoke," she replied. With the sound of her voice and the sight of the wan face turned toward him he regretted his impatience, and condemned himself for thinking of his own appetites while she suffered. He rolled the cigarette for an unnecessary time, and when he saw her press her hand to her forehead laid it unlighted on the table.

"Have you a headache?" he asked, a little later.

"Yes; distracting."

"If you would let me order you a little strong bouillon——"

She made a slight gesture. "No, no; I couldn't swallow anything."

Her face, already haggard, was now marked with lines of physical pain that struck to his heart. As he looked at her and breathed the faintest fragrance of orris root, the only perfume she affected, there came over his mind a strange vacancy, a reckless, childish desire to fall at her feet, to cling to

her, to bury his face in her soft skirt.

He sent for a bottle of eau de Cologne, and put a little of its contents on a handkerchief.

"This might do your head good, if— It is eau de Cologne; do you object to it?"

She shook her head, and when he asked if he might bathe her forehead with it she nodded with eyes closed.

He dampened the handkerchief twice again and pressed it gently upon her temples and brow. It gave him keen delight to do this, to be so near to her that he could hear her soft breath; to have that white, pained face under his hand, to be able to study the dear features, to note the lines that told so much of the story she would give him no right to investigate.

After ten minutes she said softly: "That will do; thanks." And he, thrilled to the finger-tips with her magnetism, hesitated under an impulse to bend down and press his lips to her forehead. He conquered it, for she had already taught him a mighty self-control that was as unfamiliar as unnatural to him. But although he went back to his seat without a word, the influence of that proximity was still strong upon him. He sat silently indulging it, looking upon her face, hearing her gently taken breath. Without any distinct thought, he lived that ten minutes over and over again.

"I want you to order something to eat; you must not go without something," she said at last.

"Oh, for myself, I don't need it; I had luncheon late. But you—is there anything——?"

"I should tell you if I wanted something. Just now food would revolt me. Order something for yourself and put aside some bit for me; I might take it later. I want you to be with me a long time."

Although he knew how little compliment to himself was contained in this request, it gave him delight. He crossed to the bell and pressed it, although he was not hungry; the only

physical desire he was conscious of was for another cigarette.

"Would you mind if I had a cigarette outside?" he asked presently.

"Why can't you smoke it here?"

"Because—your head."

"Oh, that is better; a cigarette never affects me."

He lighted one eagerly, and after a few puffs threw it into the fire. When the supper was brought he partook lightly of it and again gently importuned Eva, asking if she would not try to eat a little of the bird. But she only shook her head.

As he watched her he wondered why it was she seemed nearer to him tonight, nearer and more his. The old problem returned. Why did he love her? Her looks, superficially, had not appealed to him; he had known many beautiful women among whom she could not be numbered; it was not her form which, although really beautiful, had made scarcely any impression upon him until this evening. And she had certainly not shown him her most appealing side; she had been cold and repelling. Why was it, then, that he loved her?

His thoughts strayed to Winstanley—her love for him that had survived so great a slight, that absorbed her to the exclusion of everything, that was so obviously devouring her youth. This love!—did he love her for that?

The idea was a shock, and he denied it at once, although it made him stare, although there was mingled in it a curious fascination. Had she never belonged so fully to another, had he met her as an inexperienced school-girl and won what Winstanley had possessed, the fresh, vernal love of her unawakened nature, would her power have been so great, could he have resigned himself to her as he did now? Though he repeated, "Yes, yes," under his breath, the world-created being within him answered, "No." He told himself bitterly that he hated to think of her having belonged to Winstanley, that it was the cruelest pang he had to bear; yet something stronger than his reason made him vividly picture their

lives together, made him follow the development of her love, the awakening of her passion, the fresh, full flowering of a nature unweakened and unmarred by meaner ambitions or the drain of artificial emotions. There was in this pleasure something of the contradictory indulgence a hungry man, despairing of food, finds in watching another eat; but there was also the counterpassion of envy, which but adds a sharper edge to appetite, be it of the stomach or of the mind.

This thinking, though in a way intensifying his pleasure in having her near him, stirred him to nervous restlessness. He longed to pace the room, to walk away the thought of Winstanley. He smoked several cigarettes, fancying he was merely waiting for her strange mood to pass, but in reality buried deeply always in that married life wherein he had no part.

Finally Eva leaned forward and toyed with the champagne glass in front of her.

"Do you feel better?" he asked.

She nodded, but he saw that there were deep lines under her eyes and she was very pale. There was a look of approaching age about the thin line of chin. He noticed these things swiftly, and their very unloveliness increased his compassion and tenderness; he longed to lay his hand caressingly on her hair.

"Let us go," she said suddenly. "Take me back to that stupid *pension*."

VII

THE next morning she received a note from Hamilton and one from Adelaide Fulton. The latter expressed anxiety for Eva, and begged that she would send a line by the bearer.

Fearing the singer might take further steps to learn her condition, she hastily penned a few lines to say she had quickly recovered. Having despatched this, she made herself ready to automobile with Hamilton to Versailles, where they passed the day—an

unusually bright and mild one—traversing the splendid playgrounds of the country's most unhappy queen; the little and large Trianon; the intimate, memory-haunted apartments of witty Maintenon; and lunched and dined in that choicest of restaurants, the Reservoir, wherein still hover the aroma of profligate days forever dead, the echo of cultured voices, the rustle and fragrance of a society that can never be again.

Every day and evening during the following weeks they spent together making automobile excursions to interesting places in the environs, dining at Armenonville, at Saint Cloud, at Belle Vue. She avoided visiting any of the favorite haunts of Paris, lacking courage to go deliberately where she was likely to see Winstanley, yet not willing to leave the city for the very reason that he was there, that she was near to him.

Her moods during these days were not to be depended upon; at times recklessly gay, at others taciturn, uninterested and even captious. With Hamilton she made not the slightest effort at self-control. Every whim was indulged, every change of temper given vent to with an independence that told him how little his opinion meant to her. Although this hurt him, he reflected that she had let him know from the beginning what he had to expect, and there was a certain charm in being constantly in touch with the real woman, a charm he had never known in connection with any other. Sometimes her changes were so swift and unexpected, from moodiness to gaiety, from cold silence to a half-teasing interest, that he was disposed to lose the self-control he knew it was necessary to maintain. But once only did his feelings really overcome him.

One evening after dining at the Palace Hotel they had returned to her little salon in the *pension*, and she sang to him. Her first choice was "La Vie," by Nevin, and after that a romance from "Mignon." He trembled as her full, vibrating voice

poured the words forth with thrilling pathos:

*"Hélas! que ne puis-je te suivre
Vers ce pays lointain d'où le sort m'exila
C'est là, c'est là que je voudrais vivre,
Aimer, aimer et mourir.
C'est là que je voudrais vivre,
C'est là, oui, c'est là."*

When the last note throbbed into his pulses he went to her swiftly, and, laying his hands on her shoulders, pressed his lips to the top of her head in a long, tender and reverent caress, whereby some of the pent passion within him sought relief.

At first Eva made no movement. Her hands fell upon the keys. Then she wheeled about to face him, a quick reproof upon her lips; but when she saw in his pale face all that he had mastered she arose, saying merely: "Don't, don't be foolish. Come, put a log on the fire, and let us talk a little before you go; it is already late."

All this was to Hamilton a delicious purgatory, a purgatory he would not struggle to escape, although he knew it led to an eternal hell. He had been fascinated by women through their deliberate and artificial playing upon his egotism; now he was absorbed in the undisguised nature of a woman, with all its mysterious changes and impulses and bewildering comparisons. It was a thing to cherish, to adore; yes, and to fear, for it might turn to destroy him beyond all redemption, beyond hope, should he be guilty of a fault. This fear made him humble; created in him a submissiveness, a patience not native; made him oblivious of his own suffering, in his anxiety for her pleasure. His love also rendered him so keenly alive to her suffering that he labored more to assuage it than to win sympathy for himself.

Eva was blind to much that might have won her admiration under other conditions, for pain when it touches to the quick arouses an all-absorbing egotism. Women known to her had suffered calamities which in the telling might carry more horror to the auditor's ear, but, of all the miseries

that fall to the human heart, to bear the pain of a rejected love that has grown to its maturity in the belief of full return is the most intolerable. There is not the sharp, inexorable shock of death, that in its mystery stuns the mind to partial paralysis, nor the sweet recompense of spiritual communion that death affords; there is not the comfort of expending grief in tending and soothing the shattered frame of a loved one maimed in an accident or of helping him to bear his burden in the hour of disgrace. In Eva's suffering there was no compensation, nothing to do and nothing to say. There could be no confidence in others, no complaints to him to whom her love meant nothing; she had come to the horizon line of her life, and the line was a high, pitiless, impenetrable wall. The cruelest anomaly of this condition is that the wounded love does not die; on the contrary, it lives more keenly, more sentiently, like a deadly canker closed in the heart.

Hamilton's experience with women of nearly every class during his struggling years in the West, his halcyon days in the most advanced society of London and New York, while it had not before stirred the chord of affinity between his soul and another, had educated him to a clear and real cognizance of certain finer qualities in the feminine nature. He won her gradually to put trust in him, to look to him for diversion. Sometimes during these uneasy weeks she allowed him to take her to the Elysées Hôtel to dine, as it was near her *pension* and removed from the gayer quarters of the city. The people and music interested her, and an occasional sight of the world she had cut herself off from acted as a reviving stimulant and roused her to something of her old joyousness.

One evening she was in a particularly gay mood. A touch of color had come to her face, now so habitually pale, and a brighter gleam to her eyes.

They had a small table in a corner of the main *salle à manger*, and Hamilton had given private orders to the musicians, enforced by a liberal fee, to

play her favorite pieces. It was one of the few occasions when he dared to feel happy through seeing her comparatively so. As usual when in this mood, her gaiety was almost extravagant, her repartee daringly brilliant and her attitude toward him spiced with bewildering gleams of a magnetic consciousness of his love, the more affecting because so unexpected. In discussing the people about them she kept him laughing with droll comparisons and pointed criticisms.

Finally, smiling, she looked at him and said:

"See my glass. You have filled yours three times to my one!"

"Because you refused it."

"And if I did? Am I never to have food if I happen not to be hungry the first time it is offered?"

"It's always well to take a thing when one can; we never can be sure of its returning."

"What a brute you will be when these flinty principles mature with old age."

"What a tyrant to my wife, eh?"

"If you ever— Look! see who are coming!"

Hamilton turned to behold a party of New Yorkers, well known to them both, enter the room and move toward the farther end.

"Ah, the nobility of Mammon's Court! Harry Oldenheim—probably all his party. I saw his yacht was at Cannes last week—a jolly fine craft. It's been my envy for years. You people in the States do do things well when you attempt an outlay. There are no private yachts anywhere to——"

"Let us get out before they are seated. I don't want to be seen."

The butler was in the act of serving them with iced creams from the centre of a great block of clear ice, surmounted by a pyramid of candied sugar that glowed with soft color from secreted lights. Hamilton hastily put down his napkin. "Good; we shall have our coffee in the foyer."

They installed themselves in a corner near a group of palms, and were

served coffee *à la Turk* by a veritable Turk in costume.

"I shouldn't drink this," said Eva when she had enjoyed the concentrated beverage from two of the six tiny cups set before her.

"Why shouldn't you?"

"It makes my heart palpitate; but I do love it so!"

"Show your force of character, and limit yourself to three."

"I have no force of character besides—oh, say something amusing! I am getting desperately blue!"

"You should be more chameleonic and take the color of your surroundings. There is certainly nothing blue here! Look at that sweet bud of thirty-eight over there. She is laughing from her toes up. I'll wager she hasn't looked in a mirror for a month or she wouldn't have the courage to laugh. What a waste of dry-goods all that clothing is and what a lot it takes to cover her, eh?"

Glancing at Eva he discovered she was not listening, but staring at one point in troubled pensiveness. He watched her, wondering how he might divert her thoughts, when she startled him by jerking herself back and exclaiming: "Don't look at me!"

He controlled his swift rush of annoyance in compassion for her mood, which he thought he understood. "Do you want to go from here?"

"No."

He smoked viciously for a moment as a vent to growing temper. Had he better remonstrate or continue to be humble and patient? It was ignominious, unmanly even; yet—she was suffering. The sight of these people had doubtless brought up all the old life; she realized all that was lost, all——

Her hand was laid on his arm. "I am a selfish wretch," she said in an unusually gentle tone; "but—you know what I am! Why do you—? The sight of those people maddens me. I had begun to forget that world."

Hamilton's eyes grew warm; he laid his hand on hers.

"Shall we go somewhere—to the opera?"

Eva withdrew her hand. "What are they having?"

"I'll see." He called to a boy, and bade him learn what was to be given that evening.

"I want to get away before they come out," said Eva. "What a chance it was they——"

A voice saying, "I shall be in the writing-room," checked the words. Hamilton also heard it and saw that she turned white to the lips. Simultaneously they glanced whence it came and beheld Winstanley striding diagonally across the foyer, a tall, sinewy man, pale, clean-shaven, beautiful of feature, bald at the temples and dressed with the perfect taste of innate refinement. Even with the first sight of him one was impressed by a certain exquisiteness of temperament, an intense susceptibility to the finer under-qualities of life. Back of the delicate, almost classical face one felt the soul of an Emerson, the fine perceptions of a Keats and perhaps even the morbid vision of Edgar Poe. Yet withal there was manliness, though this element was to be recognized only as an indelible trait, like the cheekbones and nostrils of a civilized and modernly dressed American Indian.

As he was moving from them they watched him unseen until he passed through an opposite doorway.

Eva arose and Hamilton followed her. "Shall we go?" he asked, pained by the sight of her blanched face and agitation. Her eyes burned and were alive with swift thought.

"No; await me here. I want—I shall— Wait here."

He stepped in her way. "What are you going to do?"

The tone held her, and as their eyes met her face hardened.

"What do you mean?" she demanded, in a challenging undertone.

"I mean that—you are not going to him."

"I shall do as I choose. Don't you interfere!"

Hamilton went as white as she. "That you shall not do; no, not if I must use force!"

He saw her pupils grow large; her lips became drawn and paler. He felt her gaze like a blade buried and twisted in him, but back of the pain of this was a determination, venture-some, inflexible, in which all his passionate nature was for the moment centered.

"You are most insolent!" she said. "What is it to you what I do?"

"You shall not do that!"

"I *shall*! Don't attempt to stop me."

As she moved to push by him Hamilton caught her arm.

"You are mad!" he said hoarsely. "You don't know what you are doing. Think of the humiliation, the——"

"Let me go! You— How dare you!"

As she wrenched her arm he felt its living warmth under his fingers, and released it.

"If you go, I go, too," he said, and walked swiftly beside her. At this she turned sharply as though to strike him, her hands clenched.

"I want you to leave me!" she said. "Do you hear? I want you to leave me now, this moment!"

"I go if you go," he returned doggedly. "Before God, whatever happens, you shall not go to that man alone!"

The groups sitting near ceased conversing and stared with the eagerness for excitement ever under the skin of the French. But of them Eva and Hamilton were oblivious; they were absorbed in their own concentrated mental forces, alive in every smallest fibre to each other.

The boy Hamilton had despatched at that moment approached with the desired information, but before he had half pronounced it Eva turned off in the opposite direction. Hamilton followed her. He was vividly conscious of the swift jerking of her train, the glow of red in her hair, the almost visible fury that seemed to envelop her like an electric vapor. For himself he was more excited than angry. He had seen his duty clearly, and had

the hotel's entire population risen to defy him he would have opposed them to the death to have gained his point. That he had gained it he now recognized, but with the relief came a dull dread of the consequence.

It came quickly and more pitilessly than he had expected.

At the door of the cloak-room she turned on him, her face contorted with rage.

"This is the end!" she said. "Never speak to me, let me never see your face——"

"Don't say things you may regret later. I may have been rough; I——"

She interrupted, speaking so swiftly as to be scarcely intelligible:

"Offer me no apologies! You have insulted me as you would not dare to do had I—anyone to protect me! You have shown yourself to be underbred—despicable! I forbid you to accompany me even to the door or ever to recognize me again."

She hurled the last words with unspeakable scorn. Like a blow in the face, they sent the blood in an angry rush to his head. He was stung by the humiliation of this attempt to punish him, the deliberate effort to wound, and, briefly tempted to strike back, he caught her by the wrist.

"Listen; you shall listen to this," he began; but her pitiable pallor, the half-frightened flash of her eyes, checked his vengeful impulse. He finished more generously, though still with anger: "There will come a day when you will thank me for my service to you tonight, but what you have said in this moment I accept. You shall never see me again, though what I have done I do not regret and never shall regret."

She strained from him, and, as he freed her, paused, her lips stirring to form words she could not articulate. Then she turned into the room.

VIII

THAT night was sleepless for them both. Hamilton, in his little room,

stood in the dark by the window looking out upon the Champs Elysées, watching the ceaseless procession of carriages creeping, like phosphorus-eyed beetles, from the heart of the city. He felt that his parting with Eva was indeed final. There was nothing to be done on his side. She would be merciless, for his love meant nothing to her; it might even be a satisfaction to her to know he suffered through it! In his cooler mood he tried to blame himself, but could not. What he had done he felt to be right; had he permitted her to go she would have more justly blamed him later. What mad idea had actuated her?

The vivid picture of what her humiliation would have been had she actually carried out her impulse brought the color to his face; he even blamed her and said "Fool!" under his breath. Then the thought of her love came, the love that had enfeebled her strong nature. It started the old ache again, intensified now by the knowledge of his own banishment, that he might not longer even bask in the reflection of that love. Of this pain he was ashamed, but it was only the more unbearable because of the shame. He tried to strengthen himself by seeking for weakness and selfishness in her, by recalling every cruel word she had uttered, every action that revealed unfeeling indifference to his distress.

But through the confusion of these memories he saw only her suffering face, he could appreciate only the great sorrow that had, in spite of herself, hardened her to all the rest of the world, and it made him feel more hopelessly removed from her. Their sorrow was now akin, with the difference that his love of her made it possible for him to recognize their similitude, while she was blind to everything but her own love that formed an impassable barrier between them.

What could she have hoped to gain by humiliating herself to Winstanley? Had she thought to ignite the flame that was dead, that perhaps never existed?

The idea of her spirit humbled to such

a point for the man who had never appreciated her was hard to bear, but harder still was the knowledge that in trying to save her he had only won her hatred—for there had been hatred, real, undisguisable, in her eyes in that last look.

This was intolerable! He had deemed himself courageous, reckless of the consequence of his unpropitious association with her; but to be parted like this, knowing that she hated him, that she would probably never understand his interference save as jealous selfishness!

His thoughts worked to a sort of delirious frenzy. He determined to leave Paris; to return to his own estates and look after things there; to go on a tour about the world for a year, and let everything else go to the devil. New scenes, new people would erase her from his memory as though she had never been.

At the same time he was thinking of her lonely position, the unwholesome misery of her life. It might lead to anything! Without even him to divert her she would yield more to the morbid depressions of her mood, and might resort to any means to escape them.

Confinement in the room became unendurable, and, late as it was, he went out into the night and sought one of the many places of diversion in ever-alive Paris.

Eva, denied this blessed privilege, sat huddled in a deep chair by her grate, and yielded herself to the devouring flames of anger and yearning. She felt no regret for the impulse that had prompted her to go to Winstanley, only rage that it had been frustrated. She was confident still that, had he seen her then, glowing with all the warmth of her nature stirred to a mature awakening, he would have recognized in her something he had never before suspected; he would have seen the child he had left developed to an intense woman; she would have stood out vividly, alluringly, in comparison with Adelaide Fulton. In spite of himself he must have been interested,

for a love like hers, when matured as now, could not be ignored. She knew his nature. She understood now what he had formerly missed in her. In that moment he would have recognized it, for her nature had been keyed to the point, and she had felt her power. And he, Hamilton, had dared to interfere! By what right? Upon what grounds? She struck the arm of her chair. This was the reward of tolerating his association! Never again should he come into her life! He had treated her like a child.

If she could but have the chance again? . . . Why not look up his address and send—? No, a letter would fail! She must come upon him by chance, as then.

If he could but hear her sing! Hamilton might have arranged that—but he never would. She wanted nothing more to do with Hamilton. His very love had ever seemed like a menace to her own; he was jealous, selfish, impatient. . . .

It was as though Fate had brought her into the foyer just in time to see him enter. There was something intended by that, surely! How beautiful he was! How different from other men!

Until the day dawned she sat brooding thus, concocting plans only to dismiss them, and finally trusting to Fate that they might be brought together again, confident that her love would triumph.

After a short sleep in the morning she awoke with an idea—she would go to see Adelaide Fulton. From her she could learn something of his doings; it was a bitter thought, to learn from *her*, this woman, of her husband's—But he was not her husband! No; he was the being she loved, that was all. . . . There was danger in going to the singer's; what if—? Miss Wallace could help her; she would learn something from her.

For the first time in three weeks she entered the *pension* dining-room, and amid the hubbub of antagonistic voices played with the food that was set before her. Miss Wallace came in

late, and Eva was obliged to await her in the drawing-room, making coffee the excuse, as she dreaded rousing her suspicions by evincing a too obvious interest. In her unnerved condition it was agony to sit under the eyes of these envious and ill-bred women; to feel that they were dissecting her with the pitiless criticism to which their class always subjects one whom they know, without acknowledging, as their superior. The Californian was there, more highly rouged than ever, and Eva, who could not bring herself even to nod to her, felt her presence acutely.

She was sitting close to a large Swedish-American, a modern Amazon, a general among her class, every movement of whose large-boned frame was a boast that she was afraid of nothing and no one, that she was as good as any and meant everyone should know it. To this individual Eva could see in a mirror the Californian whisper concerning herself; she could see the scornful superiority on the Amazon's enormous face; she saw her bring her hand heavily down on the Californian's knee, say something in an undertone and rise. The next moment she had drawn a chair close to Eva's.

"You're quite a stranger these days!" she said in a deep bass and with an attempt at geniality that was like a horse trying to be ladylike. "We don't see you any more than if you didn't live here! 'Spect you go out a lot, don't you?"

Eva tried to control her annoyance. "Yes, a great deal," she said.

The woman's yellow eyes traveled over her, noted the texture of her gown, her hair, the pin at her throat, her rings, the wan and tired face.

"It's nice to have someone take a body about. Ain't you afraid of those automobile things? My! I wouldn't go in one of 'em for a min't! Don't it make you shudder when you remember all the accidents and things?"

"I don't remember them."

"Don't you? Oh, well, I guess it all depends on the way you're made. Some people never worry. It's the best way. Now, I fret like a kitten!

You wouldn't think it to look at me, would you? Ha! ha!"

Her heavy hand came down familiarly on Eva's arm as she swayed backward laughing. "My Lord! I'm as timid as a little mouse, and people think I hadn't ought to be afraid of anything. But I guess when you're enjoying things the fright goes, don't it?"

Eva swallowed her coffee quickly; her nerves seemed knotted; the atmosphere became oppressive.

"Do you go a long ways in that thing?" pursued the Swedish-American.

Eva arose. "Oh, not very far," she replied, and, inclining her head a little, added, "Good night," with a steady look that forbade any further detention.

She hurried to her room, loathing them, and determined to leave the house. A sickening repugnance for the entire situation was upon her, a deadly loneliness. She could see no way out of it, no succor, no friend. Hamilton—that was impossible. She could not tolerate him! And yet he had made life bearable. With door locked she paced the room wondering what she should do, where she should go, how endure the days to come.

When someone knocked she pictured the Swedish-American coming with some prying question, and demanded coldly who was there.

"A note, madame."

The thought flashed through her mind, could Winstanley have seen her and, under some swift impulse, have written to her—?

She took the note and relocked the door. It was from the Elysées Hôtel, but the writing was unfamiliar.

Within was a rapidly penned invitation from Mrs. Oldenheim to dine at the Elysées the next evening and to join her party the following Wednesday for a cruise in Southern waters on her husband's yacht. Regret was expressed that Eva had been out the afternoon before when Mrs. Oldenheim called to ask her in person.

For some moments she sat with the

note in her lap. Should she do it? There would be diversion, novelty, even amusement, for she loved the sea. It would be a wise move; her salvation, perhaps! Any rational being would leap at it! In such a courageous decision lay the kernel of true philosophy. Only thus could she hope to undo the wrong done her!

And all the while she was sure she would not go; that nothing would tempt her to; that she hated the note and its writer; that she was furious to know they had discovered her whereabouts.

Finally she wrote that she would be unable to accept, as she was leaving Paris at once. When this was despatched she called the maid to assist her, packed rapidly and had herself and her belongings taken to a small hotel on the Avenue d'Iéna.

Hamilton, who with every hour felt the separation growing wider between them, gave his valet money for generous bribes, and directed him to learn at any price whether Eva were preparing to leave the city. Thus he was immediately made aware of her change of domicile, and, although it took her a block farther from him, he was glad to know she was out of the uncongenial *pension* atmosphere.

To Eva the change was gratifying. Though she was really more removed from people, she felt less lonely. For two days she resigned herself with relief to thought, always going over the same ground, always regretting the opportunity lost, always trying to plan some means of obtaining another chance to see and speak with Winstanley. The more she thought of it the more faith she developed in her own power. The metamorphosis that had taken place within her she understood as the awakening of her true nature; anything and everything seemed possible to her.

Of Hamilton she thought not at all; and he scarcely drew a breath without thinking of her. He never left the hotel, save late in the evening, hoping that she might relent from sheer loneliness and send for him. He wished to

be on the spot should a note come, and provided himself with a stock of reading matter to while away the hours of waiting.

Three days later he ventured to take coffee after dinner in the foyer, where he had not appeared until sure the Oldenheim party had departed. It diverted him to smoke in a corner and watch the people, for he was tired of thinking and reading, tired of trying to ignore the one persistent thought.

He had begun to take a vague interest in some people who were laughing and chatting near him, when he saw Winstanley enter with a little, bearded Frenchman. They recognized each other simultaneously, and Winstanley, with a parting word to his companion, crossed over.

"You here?" he said in his nervous undertone. "I thought I saw you in the street yesterday. How are you?" As they clasped hands he straddled a chair opposite and leaned on the little table. "Been here long?"

"A few days."

Winstanley looked at him through half-closed blue eyes and ran his fingers up through the loose hair on his brow. "You look out of sorts," he said. "Anything wrong?"

"I'm bored. That always pulls a fellow down. A cigarette?"

Winstanley took one, and looked casually about him, noting everything. "Nothing to amuse you?" he queried uninterestedly, then lighted and puffed swiftly several times. "Did you see Oldenheim? He was here."

"I saw him at a distance."

"He would have taken you about the Mediterranean. Had rather an attractive party."

Hamilton said nothing; a curious coldness had come over him. He felt drawn within himself like a turtle that has come in contact with an antagonistic element. Yet there was a certain fascination in having Winstanley there, an interest in studying so closely his familiar features—the features so familiar to Eva. The man appeared to him essentially different from what he had understood him to be in the days

of their close association. Every nervous movement impressed him vividly; the uncommon introspective expression of eye, the beautiful, sensitive lips, the white forehead creased slightly between straight brows, conveyed an impression of almost effeminate delicacy that Hamilton had never before thought of attributing to him.

During the pause Winstanley signed to a servant and ordered a siphon and whisky; then, taking from his pocket an exquisitely carved meerschaum mouthpiece, fitted his cigarette into it and smoked, listening to the music with interested unconcern, as though he were quite alone. Suddenly he said softly: "Ah, they are off there! A half-note flat!"

When the whisky was brought he helped himself abstractedly, and sat back. "My opera is finished," he said. "Adelaide is now studying it."

"Indeed?"

For the first time Winstanley regarded his *vis-à-vis* deliberately, and there came a sharp gleam into his eyes. "You don't appear very interested," he said.

"I sincerely hope it will be a success."

"Perhaps you do, but I don't believe it; *mais ça m'est égal!* What's troubling you? Something—out with it. If a man has anything against me I should like to know it—that is only fair."

Hamilton felt his temper rising, though he could not have explained exactly why.

"What could I have against you?" he demanded, with a touch of passion.

"Certainly you have not wronged me."

"You mean that I have wronged someone?"

"It would scarcely be my place to remind you of that."

"I agree with you there," returned Winstanley, and leaned over to examine the mosaic work of the table. He examined it several moments, his white, strongly molded hand against the table's edge. When he sat erect again he puffed a long whiff of smoke into the air. "You see we look at life from

different points of view," he said thoughtfully. "I can't appreciate conventional obligations. Nature is the only controlling power I recognize. What's the value of a thing that is made obligatory by conventional law? We are born with natural drifts of temperament; if we make a mistake we should do what we can to undo it, not to live up to it! If a fellow steps into a bog, is it right to wade on through it until it's up to his throat and he drowns?"

"If he has dragged someone else in, yes."

Winstanley looked meditative. "That sort of argument is narrow-minded sophistry. People adopt it because they think they ought to."

"I've never been considered narrow-minded, but I certainly do believe that a man who assumes a responsibility, however rashly, should stand by it at all hazards."

"He should wade on through the bog, eh, until they're both drowned? Well, I don't agree with you. How is he to save the other unless he gets himself out?"

Hamilton, realizing toward what they were drifting, was shocked to silence in remembering the absent one whom he had thus crudely recalled to this man's mind to compassionate. Compassionate! The thought angered him.

"It is fortunate that there are some, even among those thought too weak, who need no helping hand in the more serious catastrophes of life. Gad! they're the ones to admire! . . . How's that whisky?"

Winstanley's blue eyes traveled slowly over the other's face. "Not bad," he replied, and drank long from his glass. Hamilton ordered another pony.

"You say your opera is to be produced at once?"

"Oh, no; Adelaide is studying it; she likes it. When it will be produced no man can say." He looked about him absent-mindedly from object to object, his fingers beating the table noiselessly.

Hamilton, watching him, tried to determine what it was that made him unlike other men. He knew him to be an able athlete, a good enough fellow with men; yet there was something indescribable, an ultra-refinement, sensibilities that gave him an air of being sufficient to himself in a sense entirely distinct from egotism.

"Your opinion has not the value of a sou to me," said Winstanley thoughtfully. "I wish it had. No one's opinion means anything to me. I'm absorbed in Adelaide Fulton; but do you think I am ever striving for her good opinion? It's a matter of indifference what she thinks, so long as we don't jar each other. We never do jar, because naturally we are adapted. We are united by natural selection; what should I care for the rest? I have in me no bitterness, Hamilton; I don't hold myself above society, but I see its mistakes. What was—my wife's love for me? The fancy of an undeveloped nature. There was no natural sympathy between us, for that can't exist one-sided. She believed——"

"Let's leave her out of the argument; after all, she isn't here."

Winstanley looked steadily at him. "You need not attempt to correct me," he said; "I don't stand for that. If we are to talk as friends, well and good; but if we are to be on conventional lines I shall meet you there as you meet me, and we can waste an hour, or—part."

"I don't feel in touch with you, I'll allow," returned Hamilton. "Your philosophy appears to me merely a misunderstood egotism."

"Why misunderstood? I do not attempt to disguise it. I have as much contempt for the man who flatters himself that he is not selfish as I have for a woman who will acknowledge no point of vanity. What man—what human being is not selfish? Every word we utter, every act we commit, every emotion we suffer is fundamentally selfish. The love we give someone is selfish; the sacrifice we make for that being is selfish. Even in the case of stronger ones, who make a sacrifice for people they hate, the motive is a

desire for self-development, a longing for the inner gratification that comes from an educationally acquired idea that denial improves the soul. Pooh!

"I have no opinion of men who think to make themselves perfect by merely obeying the letter of social—doctrines, for there is no other word to express it! When I found I could not honestly be the husband of the woman I married I made no pretenses; I allowed her to break it there!"

Hamilton blew smoke above him and watched it spread out thinly. "Wouldn't it have been more just to have decided that before marrying?" he asked.

"Yes; as it would be more just to ask a fellow before he is born what he would prefer to be. Who is just, or where is there justice in anything? Look at me and at other men of wealth! When have we done a hand's turn to help humanity? The whole principle of life is rotten. Who is to know what's right?"

"Do you ever think your view might be abnormal?"

"Perhaps it is, but there is nothing to prove it. Society has so perverted right and wrong I'm blamed if I can see where the line is drawn."

"Oh, rot! We men must shoulder the responsibility of social decadence."

"You have spent your years in the free, open life of the West. You can't judge."

"I've had my share of social life."

The other took a fresh cigarette. "When I married," he said, "it was too late; I could not appreciate the wife I won. My taste was vitiated; I hated it all. It's hard to have one's world become unendurable at thirty-six. If I had been a poor man I could be happy in ideals and lose myself in laboring for a new atmosphere."

"And, as it is, you can buy it!"

"No; once reared in that air all other is insipid; there is nothing to strive for, nothing. One becomes so familiar with the rank flimsiness of humanity that even the world's applause holds no value."

"Why understand the narrow limits

of smart society as embracing humanity? Society is but a small garden of exotic and cultivated plants, fenced off from the fresh prairies of real life."

"Yes, but one is lonely in the prairies, where there is none of the stimulating fragrance of the garden."

"I can't see your point. If you crave that atmosphere, why despise it?"

"It's the hypocrisy I loathe, not the laxity. Once law has become contemptible, one can never again take it seriously, and what galls me is that most of us pretend to. Nature is all that is left; but it must be nature of the tropics, life spiced with experience and intelligence, open, real, spontaneous! I'd rather have been born a coal-heaver than have lived the life I've led since sixteen! I haven't drawn a morally healthful breath. Look at me! I'm in fit enough condition physically, but my nature is soaked in the alcohol of extravagance. I have done nothing criminal, but I've absorbed into my soul the debasing elements of a life that is poisonously artificial; I've drunk of it until my nature sickened and craved change. My appreciation of simple, healthful existence is destroyed, as a drunkard's stomach is destroyed for wholesome food. My one surviving interest is a desire for sensation, and this I must have."

"Why the deuce did you let yourself—?"

Winstanley's attention was caught by something at the end of the foyer. "Gad!" he exclaimed; "here come Olga Whitney and her party. I must be off!"

As he arose Hamilton looked up and saw the lovely Mrs. Furgerson Whitney, one of New York's leading younger matrons, coming toward them. She wore a handsome dinner gown and was accompanied by another young woman whose husband, like hers, had been left behind to accumulate dollars while she enjoyed her annual vacation in Paris. A typical specimen of globe-trotting clubman, always to be found haunting foreign capitals, walked attentively at their side.

As they approached, Mrs. Whitney

caught Winstanley's eye. She went to him swiftly.

"What chance! You here. I am so glad! Now you must both come with us to the Casino. 'La Voluptata' is there, the serpent of Eden! You can't resist!"

She laughed gaily, and glanced mischievously at the clubman.

"Sorry," said Winstanley quietly; "I never go to that sort of thing, and——"

"Oh, well, *break* your rule. What folly! Why are you here, if not to see things? We shall have one of the old-time suppers at Maxim's. Don't tell me you've become Philistine. You will come, won't you?" turning to Hamilton.

"I should like it immensely, had I not already promised myself for this evening."

"Oh, nonsense! Come along, do! Make a *partie carrée*. We're odd, you see, and you are just the man we want."

"I wish I could avail myself—it's unfortunate. This evening I'm tied up."

"Well, I must be off!" remarked Winstanley, bowing rather stiffly to the women, and, murmuring *au revoir* to Hamilton, he withdrew.

"Gracious! how funnily propriety sits upon Bobby!" said Mrs. Whitney, whereupon she and her friend laughed with the effervescence of lately partaken champagne.

"His manners have not improved with his morals," remarked the latter. The clubman smiled, and, smoothing his clean-shaven chin, looked languidly about the foyer. Mrs. Whitney made a few more alluring appeals, which were met by Hamilton with the same politely obstinate regret; then she turned away, saying over her shoulder, "If you change your mind, join us at Maxim's at twelve. The room to the right, upstairs."

IX

THE next day Eva felt her loneliness so deeply as almost to long for the

people of the *pension*. For the first time since their parting she thought with regret of Hamilton. He had been good to her; he was interesting; life was certainly intolerable without someone. If only he did not love her she could send for him, but, as it was, such encouragement would only make their relations insufferable.

Yet what was there ahead of her? This sort of thing could not go on. The thought of seven more days spent as she had spent the past few months was appalling. Her room—she could afford only one here—oppressed her. Every article of furniture had already become familiar with that stolid monotony that seems to be conveyed to inanimate things by an atmosphere devoid of change and sensation.

With no definite object in view she dressed and went out. The sun, as a rare indulgence, flooded the day with his genial radiance. There was a sweet hint of spring in the air, and men were to be seen pushing little carts filled with early flowers. A steady stream of rubber-tired vehicles, smart carts, cabs, automobiles sped gaily toward the Bois, bells ringing, hoofs beating, horns tooting, machines puffing in a glad hubbub of pleasure-seeking activity.

Eva walked aimlessly, feeling the beauty of the day touching her ache to fuller life, feeling how far removed she was from the joy of it all, when she came upon a group of brightly ribboned *bonnes* attending fairy-like children.

The scene awoke an emotion that rang through her heart as one's voice, calling, rings through chambers forever bereft of the being loved. She remembered her little son—the bond that might have held Winstanley—the living combination of their separate beings!

Like the quivering flashes in a cinematograph, all that was lost to her passed before her in rapid succession. She felt herself an outcast of life, love and happiness.

She must have someone at once to talk to; someone who—

She saw a *bureau de poste* opposite,

and crossed to it. She would telegraph Hamilton. In twenty minutes he would come in his car and take her at a wild pace to—Versailles, any place. He would be sure to be there waiting, and he would forgive, for he loved her. Loved her!

She paused at the door. If only he did not! She could not endure that; it might mean explanations—perhaps tenderness on his part! She turned in the opposite direction, walking slowly.

Hamilton, in a cab, saw her as she crossed the avenue and turned down the rue Boëtié. He saw the loneliness in her face, and his heart smote him. He longed to get out and go to her; no humiliation seemed too great could he but serve her or offer her some comfort. The direction she took prevented his obeying the impulse, for he knew Adelaide Fulton lived there, and was aware that should she be going to her she would not welcome him.

He stopped the cab at the corner and watched until she passed under the doorway he dreaded to see her enter; then sat for awhile burning with anger before he ordered the man to take him back to the hotel.

Adelaide, in a pale green *peignoir*, was at her desk writing, when Eva entered the bedroom whither she had been summoned by a call.

"*Bien, ma chérie!* I thought you were buried or married," she said, without looking up.

Eva sat down and looked about her, wondering why she had come. There was a typewritten manuscript lying on the sofa. She took it up and read where it was open.

There were music and words; a love scene, alive with unusual passion and pathos. It held her attention. She read on with interest.

Adelaide leaned over and pressed an electric bell.

"You are not loquacious," she murmured, rising and carefully folding the paper on which she had written a long telegram.

"What is this?" asked Eva.

"My new opera, 'Après la Vie.' Good, but too advanced for— *Nom d'un chien!* Why doesn't that woman come?" She pressed the bell long and savagely. "However, the author has sufficient means to produce it himself; and once well produced it might penetrate their dull pates; who can tell? Certainly the idea is beautiful, and the music— Oh, that woman!"

She sprang to the door and, flinging it open, shrieked, "Margarete! Margarete! Where in the devil's name are you? *Sapristi!* I have been ringing here for a century! Do you think me an electric battery? Come at once and take this telegram!"

As the maid came bustling up the corridor, tying on an apron, she continued, "This should have gone an hour ago! What do you think I write telegrams for, to keep them to cool while the post goes? *Parbleu!* And you languidly wash the milk pail or pare potatoes!"

"I did not hear madame."

"Tomorrow the wires shall be attached to your ears and legs! You shall be shocked until every hair on your head curls to a crisp. Fly with this."

Margarete, trying to suppress laughter, seized the paper and flew.

A key turned in the outside door; someone entered and closed it.

Adelaide sank into a chair opposite Eva, looking at her critically. The latter was still absorbed in the manuscript.

"Tell me," said the singer gently, "are you wanting something to do?"

Eva looked up. "What do you mean?"

"Would you like to get an engagement?"

"No; you know I am not going in for singing professionally."

"But—what's worrying you?"

"Worrying me? Why do you—?"

A tremor crossed her pale face; there was a step in the corridor and someone whistling a bar from "La Bohème."

"Ah!" exclaimed Miss Fulton, "my Rudolf! Come in!"

The door opened and Winstanley stood on the threshold.

As Eva was facing the door, their eyes met instantly. Winstanley was transfixed; the color sank from his face, leaving it paler than hers.

"*Bien*, don't be shy!" exclaimed Adelaide, who saw neither of them. "You certainly have faced two women alone before now. Close the door! The draught is sending lizards up and down my spine. Miss Blackwell, this is Mr. Winstanley, the author of——"

As she beheld Eva's face and the man's, she recognized the presence of tragedy; her pupils widened swiftly.

Her scrutiny helped Eva. Though trembling violently she made no sound. With his presence seemed to come all the familiar atmosphere of their life together; the intoxicating happiness she had known only with him; the living warmth within her that he had created and that had been frozen without him. She felt it her right to fly to the embrace of his arms, the embrace wherein alone she could find an antidote for pain, wherein alone her life was complete. All the past was forgotten at the sight of that familiar face and form; all was forgiven in the delirium of a joy that was as unreasoning as the gladness of a caged bird, set free in its native element.

"My new opera," finished Miss Fulton quietly. "Bepo, we have been reading it. Bring that chair over. . . . I want Miss Blackwell to come to the first night."

"Certainly," said Winstanley. "That, however, may be a long way off yet."

The words carried no meaning to her; it was *his* voice, exquisitely familiar, the voice that had made time alive to her, that had brought the warmth of midday into wakeful dawns, that had illumined darkness at midnight, that had awaked her soul, her passion, the very woman in her. Her nature recognized its creator and thrilled to intense susceptibility. She was almost oblivious of the strain of the situation, save that she felt the other woman's

presence like a bar between herself and him, and this kept her quiet.

Adelaide regarded her. "You will be here in the fall, will you not?" she asked.

Eva looked back into the pale eyes without seeing them.

"Oh, yes—in the fall, yes."

"*Bon!* Then you shall have a box. Before then you might come down to some of the rehearsals; they will familiarize you with the music; you will enjoy it more when you know it. Bepo, will you bring some whisky from the dining-room? It is chilly here; a little tonic will do us all good."

Eva, like one hypnotized, had every line of his attitude photographed upon her mind; when he rose the charm was shaken. She regained possession of herself as he left the room.

"I must go," she said softly, and attempted to rise, but a swift faintness overcame her; she sank back.

Adelaide went to her. "You are ill," she said. "What is it? You seem——"

"Nothing—good-bye. If—if—he will see me to a cab——"

"You must take something."

"No, I must go now. I shall be better——"

Winstanley entered, and Adelaide, looking at him critically, said: "Bepo, put her in a cab."

"My auto is here," he returned softly. "Perhaps—will you go in that?"

"Thanks."

"Will you have some of this?"

"No, no; it is better not." She went to the door swiftly, without a glance at Adelaide. That endearing nickname, so out of keeping with her ideal of Winstanley, racked her; she was frantic to be out of sight of this woman whom his presence seemed to have entirely changed, who seemed to have become suddenly menacing and to glory secretly in her advantage.

In reality the singer, though curious, was genuinely troubled by what she saw in the other woman's face. She did not attempt to follow her, but made a sign to Winstanley to do

so, and turned to the window, her eyes full of wonder.

Eva's knees shook as she descended the stairs. The feeling of him beside her, the radiating glow of a personality once as intimate as a second self, penetrated like warmth to the centre of her being. She longed to speak merely to attract his attention more exclusively to herself, to feel herself for the moment absorbing him.

But, great as this desire was, she could articulate no word. All the self-possession, all the power she had felt maturing within her during these months of pain, was broken down and destroyed, as a delicate vine before the attack of storm. In his presence she had become as a child; her individuality was benumbed because her sensibilities were too vividly alive to him. As in the past, all the innate cleverness of her nature, all the quick responsiveness and keen perceptions that won the admiration of others, were drowned in an uncontrollable emotional ecstasy. She realized her disadvantage with panic; she knew she was losing an opportunity that would never return, and argued frantically that if she had more time she would be able to control herself; the meeting had been too sudden, the chance too short.

They reached the automobile without exchanging a syllable; Winstanley held out his hand to help her in. She hesitated, then placed hers in his.

"Will you come with me?" she said, trying to speak steadily, but the eyes looking into his were veiled with the love she could not hide. He saw it, and was puzzled how to act. Although he thought her stupid he was sorry for her, and this compassion made him ready for any concession within bounds.

"Why?" he asked. "Are you ill?"

"Yes."

He was thoughtful as he helped her in, and then said quietly: "I must tell—her; I shall be back in a moment."

As he entered the house Eva drew a deep breath. He was coming back! He would be with her, she would have him to herself! She must get herself in hand; she must let him feel the

magnetism of her developed nature. He must not know that she suffered or that his presence meant so much to her. Now she could do it. She would be coolly clever. She would compliment him upon his choice of associate. She would laugh over the oddness of their meeting; she would draw clever comparisons between the present and the past; treat it all lightly as one unhampered by conventional prejudices should. She would speak of her own ambitions, her voice. Quite serenely she would let him know that, although they were no longer related, it would be nice to see each other at times; that she liked Adelaide Fulton; that she was happy in this atmosphere of freedom; that she was so glad to——

He came out quickly in the long coat he had put off in Adelaide's hall; and at the sight of him her brain became benumbed again, her heart swelled; a delicious pain thrilled through every nerve.

"What is the address?" he asked. She gave it; he repeated it to the chauffeur and got in beside her. She felt the touch of his sleeve upon her arm, and with it came the old sense of completeness she had not known since they parted. As he leaned down to see if the side door was securely fastened, she looked at his profile more closely than she had yet dared.

Its vivid familiarity recalled sharply one of the most serious and unhappy scenes they had ever experienced. In a fit of depression and despair of ever winning from him the love she gave, she had committed the fatal mistake of revealing her pain, and, unable to comprehend the frozen severity with which her reproaches were met, had flamed into accusations, even abuse, that only set the barrier higher between them and aggravated her own suffering to a feverish delirium. There had been a brief exchange of hot words, bitter with helpless sorrow on her part, coldly unyielding and reproving on his. She had sought frantically for sympathy, and had met the stone wall of his displeasure. Against this she had beaten herself with the recklessness, the blind

insanity of love that has become morbid by feeding on itself. As she had looked upon his cold face then, with the microscopic gaze of moral hunger, its smallest detail had been engraved upon her mind so distinctly as now to be sharply recognizable, even to the few uneven hairs at the end of his eyebrows, the slight indentation at the temples, the dark line about the blue iris of his eyes. This brought back the influence of her suffering and rendered her less courageous, less master of herself. Her nature cowered before the beloved hand that had chastised it, not instinctively, but by reason of the knowledge of its own limitation in relation to him. She had learned too late that while loving him she could never win him, yet the very memory of past humiliations augmented his power over her by lessening her self-esteem. She longed to throw off the tyranny of his influence, but her very fear seemed to constitute the only tie now uniting them, because it was born of the time when he had belonged to her. For this reason it was dear, delightful, something to indulge; and, weakened as she was by the long separation, she yielded herself to it in an ecstasy of silent delight in his presence.

"Are you here for long?" asked Winstanley presently, in that quiet way she knew so well.

"I don't know—perhaps, yes."

They glided out of the narrow street into the crowded avenue, slackening suddenly, now and again, because of the traffic, then speeding on again smoothly as a bird on the wing. In a few moments the journey would end; he would leave her, and she had said nothing, done nothing but what must further debase her in his eyes. He could see no change in her, no development, nothing to interest him. If only she could say something that would make him realize that she was changed, that he was not with a child, but with a woman of experience, of broad views, of character and independence! This silence was insufferable. He would think her sulky, reproachful and basely humble.

The blocks were flying past them; she could see her corner but a little way ahead.

"You will think me very stupid," she said desperately, her voice shaken. "It seems so—I had so much to tell you—I mean to say to you; that is, if we ever met! It is strange, isn't it?"

The color came rushing to her face; she turned away that he might not see. Winstanley did not look at her; a puzzled expression came into his eyes.

"Whatever took you to Adelaide Fulton's?" he asked; and Eva, feeling there was reproof in the question, experienced a pang of angry pain that annoyance should be the only emotion he knew in meeting her. She could not answer bitterly—she had no right. He resented her going to the singer's, but she could not complain that he was a familiar inmate there; he belonged to that woman!

A great burning came into her heart; she felt it penetrate to her eyes, and kept them turned away, not daring to speak. The fact that her silence did not trouble him only added to her pain and wrought her to the verge of an excited outbreak to which her utter helplessness was driving her. Yet she experienced no real humiliation in knowing he could feel for her only contemptuous compassion; for the great misfortune of love that has passed the limit of egotism is that it forgets self in its desire to hold as its own the one loved. It is at this point that he who loves must resign hope. The beloved, if already chilled, stands untouched upon the strong pedestal of growing indifference. Calm criticism takes the place of the other's feverish efforts to reach him; he watches with increasing distaste all the contortions, the feebleness, the frantic struggles that so mar what he once admired. The stronger the love, the more debased becomes the lover who starves for requital, and the less sympathetic becomes he whose indifference has wrought it to a state of frenzy.

Though Eva might clearly and eloquently have preached this to another, she could not practice it. Reason and

calculation were gone; she was possessed by the fatal error that her love must win in the end, that its very intensity would make him yield to it.

She felt the break close, and they hissed to the curb before her hotel.

Winstanley got out; Eva did not stir. She was looking straight ahead, her face very white. Winstanley looked surprised and somewhat apprehensive.

"Is this it?" he said.

She turned to him and whispered: "Listen. Come here; I want to tell you something."

He got partly into the car and leaned toward her.

"I want—will you take me a little farther—into the Bois? It does me good. I don't want to go in; I dread going in!"

He hesitated briefly, looking at his gloved hand; then, calling to his man to go on, got in again and pulled the door to sharply.

They were off in a flash, flying noiselessly down the almost deserted Avenue d'Iéna.

"You are angry," said Eva, goaded to it by the pang his displeasure caused her.

"No, not angry," he returned. "It seems—a little foolish, this."

Her glance was hot with swift rage that seized her with the sudden fury of mania.

"Why foolish?" she demanded passionately. "Do you begrudge me these few moments? Is it much to ask?"

"No, it is nothing; but what can be gained by it? Can't you see it is—wrong?"

"To you, yes; to you! You never wished us to meet again. Fate has brought us together. It means something to me; more than—but what is that to you? I am as though I had never existed to you; less than the stranger you pass in the street. I—the mother of that little soul, your son! The woman who gave her life to you; whose only crime was to love you too well! Oh, Bob, do you ever think, do you ever remember?"

Great tears were swimming in her

wide eyes as she looked at him; and her face, blanched and sunken, quivered in a nervous effort to control herself.

"If I take you seriously in your present condition," said Winstanley, after reflecting, "I shall be doing you a greater wrong than if I had refused to come with you——"

"I *am* serious!" she interrupted, laying her hand on his arm. "You must not treat me lightly, Bob; I have learned a new philosophy; I am not as I used to be; you can't judge me by today, but later you shall see. I— you see; do you not find me changed?"

A slight, half-indulgent smile crossed his lips.

"You are as much of a child as ever."

"Oh, no, no! I am not! Why do you say that?"

"But this, this in itself! Why am I here with you? It is madness; you will see it later."

She sank back, chilled to the heart. The tears in her eyes dried as she looked into the crimson distance of the Bois. Dusk was falling; the vehicles passing them were all homeward bound; some were already alight.

"You are colder than stone," she said bitterly; "harder than— Yes, I shall probably regret this; but why should I? What wrong have I done?"

"No wrong—if it is agreeable to you!"

They turned into a side road where there was not another vehicle, and flew smoothly along toward the violet haze beyond, where thin branches of trees traced the rosy sky like a network of coarse lace. Neither spoke. Eva, realizing that she had made a mistake, that she had succeeded only in making him uncomfortable with her, condemned herself and forgot his offense. A dull conviction that the lack of sympathy she had always felt in him was owing to some fundamental discordance in her became so real she longed to be rid of him, to shake herself forever out of the rut she had so weakly fallen into, and either begin life anew or die. Her efforts had been futile—she would always be the same to him; always incapable, feeble, as incom-

prehensible as he was to her. With him she could never be anything but what he had created; her real nature could only be developed apart from him; it was right that they should be separated.

The world seemed very empty and wide and objectless as she faced this sudden materialization of a suspicion that had long haunted her. There had come a break in the horizon wall, and she saw beyond the broad, lonely plain where he was not—nor her love for him. It was that she would miss the most!

"Shall we turn back?" she said calmly. "It is getting chilly."

Winstanley spoke to the chauffeur, and settled back in his seat. He was relieved, for her manner bespoke a change that dissipated the constraint of their bearing toward each other. His apprehension of a scene vanished; yet he thought it best that she should break the silence lest, by speaking, he might recall to her the influence of their past relations, and his appreciation of her hypersensitive condition at the moment told him this would be a risk.

She seemed as unwilling to speak as he, and they sped over the way they had come in silence, until the increasing darkness made it necessary to have lights, and the car came to a standstill.

When they were en route again Eva said more composedly:

"I don't wonder you think me childish; eccentric would be a better word. This situation is—extreme! Driving in the Bois with my husband who is no longer my husband—an unwilling victim!" She laughed softly and drew her furs more closely about her.

"Don't give me ugly names," said Winstanley. "There's no harm done. I believe in one obeying one's impulses, so long as they hurt no one. This is an experience I could never know again, and I thank you for it."

"I was not suing for pardon."

"I know you were not. I should do that."

"No; I have nothing to forgive you. It would have been easier if I had."

She longed to say that had he been less honest with her she could more readily have put him out of her life; she would never have been guilty of the indiscretion of seeking him again. But she feared the effect upon herself; even the thought made her heart full, made her yearn to lay her head on his shoulder and give vent to the tears stored within.

She leaned farther from him that she might not be tempted beyond her strength.

Winstanley, too, was smothering utterances. He was curious to know how she had become acquainted with Adelaide Fulton, and how well she knew her, but he feared to lead the conversation in that direction.

"Do you think you will make Paris your home?" he asked presently.

"Oh, no! I shall probably leave soon—tomorrow."

"Back to the States?"

"I think not; no. I don't know where, quite."

They left the Bois and took a sweeping curve about the Arc de Triomphe into the crowded thoroughfare once more.

"I should like to ask you something, Eva," said Winstanley gravely, after reflecting. "Try to be—unconventional about it; to take it as I mean it, not as you did before. We've held a close relation to each other; it is folly to ignore that, because now we see that relation must end. I owe you much. You know what immense income I have. A share of that belongs to you, by right, not through my generosity; will you accept it?"

Each word fell upon her like a blow; it seemed awful to have this subject brought into that sacred hour. Yet the thought behind the suggestion thrilled her like a caress. She remembered the interval of reflection, and her heart beat high in realizing that he had then been thinking of her, even considering her happiness, longing to do something to add to it. It made her feel that he did not wholly hate her, and she was more grateful than if he had laid an empire at her feet.

She answered after a slight delay, and her voice seemed cold from suppression.

"There is no need, Bob; my father left me comfortably off. I shouldn't know what to do with more."

"You could lay it up; it wouldn't bother you."

Eva's hands closed. They were on the Avenue d'Iéna; they would part with this hideous subject uppermost.

"No," she said softly. "I would rather not speak of it again."

She longed to say something as a relief to this, something that might change the tenor of his thoughts; but nothing appropriate occurred to her, and the car drew up before her hotel without anything further being said.

As Winstanley helped her out she held to his hand on reaching the pavement and laid her other upon it. "Are you happy, Bob?" she asked in an unsteady undertone that told but little of what prompted the question.

"Yes, quite; happier than I deserve to be, I think. And you?"

"Oh, I'm happy."

She still held to his hand; he could not see her face in the dark, but the small hands pressed more closely upon his. Her hesitation fretted him, the pressure fretted him. He felt constrained and awkward.

"I'll see you again probably," he said, tightening his fingers about hers a little as a parting salutation.

Eva drew closer to him. "No," she said huskily, "never again. I want—I want you to take me in your arms, Bob; I want you to kiss me once as though I were—as you used to do."

He felt her crush up to him, the familiar, slight form; he felt her catch her breath convulsively like a child that has been punished and comes to "make up," and he knew in that moment that she had mastered herself.

For the first time in years a tremor of tenderness thrilled through him. He closed his arms about her and held her close, sensing the quick, heavy beating of her heart. As he sought her lips he felt the cold wet of tears upon her face.

"Good-bye, little girl," he said, drawing back from her clinging hands. "You were too good for me; remember that. The fault was mine, all mine—or, rather, the fault of my education."

Eva said nothing; but, as they withdrew from each other, she passed her ungloved hand over his face, as though to get the impression of features she would never see again. He caught it and pressed it between his. "God bless you, Eva! Be happy."

She went in quickly, heeding not what those in the hall might think of her appearance.

X

It is not the most real despair that excites us to reckless defiance of the conditions ruling our life. There must be a remnant of interest, a lingering love of self and life and the things we try to despise, when desperate means are resorted to for drowning the inner hunger.

Eva did not weep when she reached her room; the tears that last embrace had started dried and stiffened on her cheeks. She sat for a long time just as she had on entering, her hat and coat still on, her gloves in her hand.

She did not think of Winstanley after the first few moments. During that time she had lived over his last words, his embrace, the touch of his lips, until it all faded into an empty future, a wide gulf of time wherein nothing took shape.

Gradually a decision formed. She must leave Paris at once; she must begin life over; it mattered not where or how, but it must be done. If there was any impression conveyed by this thought it was a vague dread of loneliness. She felt more utterly alone than she had ever done before, for now there was nothing to look forward to, nothing to remember, nothing to suffer.

It was long past the dinner hour when she went to her desk and wrote to Hamilton to come to her.

When the note was despatched she took off her hat and wraps. Her bones

ached for having sat for two hours in one position. She noticed this vaguely, as she raised her arms to tidy her hair. The face looking back at her was haggard and thin; its unfamiliarity was dimly gratifying as being in keeping with the change within. There was no beauty left; she saw this with eyes made critical by long habitude to detect for improvement every smallest defect; yet it caused her no regret. Hamilton loved her; her appearance would make no difference to him! And if it did, what matter?

She ordered tea and toast to be brought to her sitting-room, and settled herself close to the fire. When the tray was being taken away Hamilton was announced.

"I am so glad you were in," said Eva. "Sit there near to me."

"I have been in always, waiting," he returned, looking at her with tender compassion.

She was watching the fire. "Have you?"

He could say nothing then; her appearance shocked him; she seemed unfamiliar, like a stranger; one who needed all his tenderness and tolerance. Her loss of beauty was not so apparent to him as her loss of courage. He had been bitter in spirit during the past days, and had stored up some harsh things to say to her when the opportunity should come; but this was not the being who had hurt him. This woman so wan, so needful of his strength, was not one to punish or reproach. Her very unloveliness made him yearn more to serve her, because it made his love more real to him. To lay his love at her feet when she was broken thus was a greater joy than to offer it in the zenith of her healthful beauty, and the realization of this acted as a stimulant to all that was best in him. As his heart yearned over her in that interval he loved his love; he found more substantial pleasure in the prospect of comforting her, even though it must be through sacrifice of himself, than he had known in dizzy moments under her touch or the dream of possessing her as his own.

A log fell forward, throwing a shower of sparks into the room. One lighted upon Eva's skirt, and Hamilton hastily extinguished it. "It didn't burn," he said.

"Will you put the log farther back? It is smoking." He did as she asked, and returned to his chair.

"Have you been here long?" he inquired.

"A week. Were you at the other house?"

"No."

Eva was still looking vacantly into the fire; she appeared to be paying no attention to what was said. After a pause she glanced at him and asked: "Do you want to know why I sent for you?"

"It is enough that you sent," he replied, with restraint. "I have been waiting, hoping you might—forgive."

"I had nothing to forgive. It is you who should forgive—perhaps—I don't know. But—that is all past. Reginald, I am old now; I am wise, too. Until tonight I have been a child, so blind, so stupid——"

As he saw her lips quiver he leaned forward, resting his head in his hands, in order to conquer the impulse to get down by her side, to take her hands, and beg her to lay her burden on him, to let him help her under any restrictions she might dictate. The thought of her suffering was intolerable to him, and he felt that she was suffering.

But she was not. The tremor was merely the consequence of overstrained nerves. Her strongest desire at the moment was to arrive at some decision about leaving Paris; that was the uppermost thought; the future beyond it held no interest.

She moved restlessly, pushing her chair a little back from the fire. "But that doesn't matter. For the present the important point is that I must leave Paris tomorrow early; will you go with me?"

"You know that I will."

"I am afraid to be alone, that is all; I make no pretenses."

"I understand."

"And yet——" She looked into the

fire a few moments, then got up and crossed the room, touched some photographs on the piano, looked closely at one she cared nothing about, and turned back to him.

He got to his feet. "Do you want me to go?" he asked.

"I want to know something," she said, looking straight into his eyes. "Do you love me?"

Hamilton paled; he set his teeth that he might not appear foolish. "You know," he said under his breath.

She read in the white, stern face all that he could not and dared not utter, and her eyes shifted from his. "Do you love me enough to—take me as I am, not loving you; my nature hardened, warped perhaps; with the memory of another man in my heart; with the possibility that I may never love you?"

Hamilton's eyes were burning; they were fixed upon her almost fiercely. He folded his arms; his voice was harsh when he spoke. "Eva, do you know what you are saying?"

"Yes, I have thought it all over. I shall be your wife, and I shall be a good wife, for I shall have no other interest but you. I said what is not so just now; there is no other man in my heart; no memory—perhaps no heart."

She was turned a little from him now, looking toward the fire, her hands clasped loosely before her. Hamilton hugged his arms closer, fearing to jar her mood by loss of control, realizing that any outburst on his part would be cruelly out of harmony with her.

"I am not offering you much," she said softly, "but perhaps it is the best condition, after all. Real love is never mutual. One loves, the other is loved, that is the law of modern life. If mutual love exists it is a relic of barbarism, and not to be found among the educated."

"It may come," he said. "God knows I shall do my best. You will give new impetus to my life; all that is best in me will develop to win you."

"No, you must not hope for that; you would not be happy. We are creatures of cultivated sensibilities.

Serenity doesn't appeal to us. We want sensations, anxieties, extravagances. If I loved you as you love me the flavor of life with me would be gone; you would look about you for something new; everything——"

"No; you must not say that. Eva, remember, my nature developed in a healthful atmosphere. You may think these things now, but if you will give yourself to me you will be bestowing upon me the greatest happiness ever given a man; and I shall make it my life's purpose that you may share my happiness."

He held out his hands to her, and she laid hers in them.

"Don't kiss me," she whispered, as he drew her nearer to him. "Tonight I am tired, unnerved. Tomorrow we shall be out of Paris; perhaps I shall feel better."

He drew her gently closer and pressed his lips against the soft hair that he had once kissed in an ecstasy of feeling; now he merely breathed its

delicate fragrance as he might the essence of some sacred and fragile flower, holding her as he would a little child, in an embrace as chaste as the love that made him oblivious of everything in life but her.

For a few moments Eva yielded herself motionlessly. A feeling of peace and repose stole over her; she felt protected, comforted.

Presently she raised her wan face and looked at him steadily, reading all the promise of his love that needed no words. A faint smile crossed her lips; she turned her face against his shoulder, saying softly: "God bless you, Reginald!"

"May He give me strength to be worthy," he said huskily, bending over the bowed head. "All my life shall be yours, Eva, forever."

Quick steps sounded in the corridor; someone passed the door, then another. Hamilton drew her closer; she stirred and whispered something he could not hear.



SUDDEN RAIN

THEY flash upon the window-pane
From skies grown swiftly dark—
The wild, keen lashes of the rain;
They make my heart their mark!

Even so can tears—tears not my own,
The very daylight blind;
Across my heart the griefs are blown
Of all my human kind!

EDITH M. THOMAS



INEXPERIENCED

"I HEAR that Jenkins and his wife fight like cat and dog."
"Well, this is the first time they've been married."

THE OFFICE-HUNTERS

By George Horton

SHE impressed one as being mysterious—perhaps dangerous. She was a large woman, with beautiful features and piercing black eyes that added to the impression of mystery; no blue-eyed person is ever mysterious. She spoke French, too, on occasion—real French, not the American kind—and this language is often part of the equipment of an adventuress. Of her past history not much was known. It was generally supposed that Monsieur Corot was dead; but, dead or alive, she had succeeded so thoroughly in relegating him to yesterday's "seven thousand years" that nobody ever gave him a thought.

Her present means of support were not well understood, but it was generally supposed that she was a cunning and unobtrusive lobbyist, one of the few who had managed to hang on and make the business go. She was a woman of magnetic presence and her conversation was sprightly and entertaining. Johnny Raddle first met her in the Statue Room of the Capitol, and was introduced to her by Senator Stillwater, the noted Southern orator and foe of the Administration. Young Raddle was on the senator's trail and the latter knew it, and had no further interest in him than to get rid of him on all occasions as inoffensively as possible. The statesman, whose chief ambition was to be as big a thorn as possible in the President's side, could have done nothing for Johnny, and, as the old topical song says, "wouldn't if he could." Nevertheless, the latter was connected with the Raddles of Raddleton, and it seemed best to keep

him floating along on purple clouds of senatorial affability.

Stillwater, with his silk hat tilted far back on his head and a bundle of papers in his hand, was standing at the marble feet of James A. Garfield, talking with Mrs. Corot—Madame Corot, she was usually called, in deference to her perfect French. He was evidently amused at something, for the madame never spoke of business except at the right moment.

Raddle stood at a little distance, ostensibly gazing at another statue, yet with the tail of his eye upon the senator, ready to spring upon him or to take up the pursuit again, as the case might require. A fleeting expression of annoyance darkened Stillwater's brow, quickly cleared by a happy thought.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, with seeming delight, "good afternoon, Raddle. Mr. Raddle, this is Madame Corot. Mr. Raddle," he explained sweetly, "is one of our diplomats. He was second secretary at Quexlo during the last Cleveland Administration. Good day, madame; I must be off. Good day, Mr. Raddle; glad to have met you again, if but for a moment."

Raddle stood looking after him ruefully. Madame Corot smiled—a charming smile of mingled comprehension, amusement and sympathy.

"Did you want something of him?" she asked. There was a maternal tone in the voice, it was so charged with good feeling.

"Yes, I want to be put back in the diplomatic service. He is always pleasant to me, but he generally man-

ages to get rid of me right away. Now he has unloaded me upon you."

"Are you sorry?" with archness.

Raddle lifted a silk tile, revealing a prematurely bald head, and bowed with whimsical gallantry.

"I have gained more than I can possibly have lost," he replied readily, "if I am to be numbered among your acquaintances."

This was not bad. Besides, as she mentally phrased it, "he was a pretty boy and extremely *comme il faut*." The madame's business lay so much with aged statesmen that she thought of all men under thirty-five as "boys." Her own age was an unknown quantity which no algebra would ever be able to solve. She guarded all illuminating data with a woman's supernatural vigilance in such matters. She appeared young, yet she seemed so unmistakably a woman with a "past" or with many "pasts" that her youthfulness reminded one of that of Rider Haggard's "She" or of Helen of Troy—a sort of blooming immortality, as it were.

"Why do you attach yourself to Stillwater?" she asked.

"Because he's my senator and all my people know him."

She laughed. "He can't help you any. His relations with the President are those of the cat with the dog. Whom else do you know?"

The question evinced an unmistakable desire to help him or to give him advice. As he walked about the rotunda with her he explained all his hopes and his sources of possible influence. She interrupted him from time to time with shrewd comment, betraying intimate psychological knowledge of the great men whom he mentioned, as well as their attitude upon the questions of the day. She was as thoroughly at home in the Capitol as a shoemaker in his shop, and she pointed out to him the peculiarities of some of the worst of the paintings.

"But how did the bad pictures find their way in here?" asked Raddle.

"The poor senators can't all be good judges of art," she replied. "I'm

trying now to put through a picture by Villjeon, of Mobile, which is a work of art and belongs here. It is entitled 'San Juan Hill,' and represents the charge of the Rough Riders, with Roosevelt at their head. Villjeon wants twenty-five thousand dollars, and I get five thousand dollars commission."

Raddle emitted a shrill whistle.

"You must be a wonderful woman if you can get that much money out of anybody."

"Not at all. It is quite possible to induce people to spend other people's money—at least, so I've been told. Villjeon asked me to speak to two or three people whom I know about his picture, and they have received me very kindly. I have two votes promised already."

They had passed out of the Capitol now and were descending the imposing steps on the west side.

"You must come and see me and we will have a good talk about your matter. Perhaps I can help you in some way. You help me and I'll help you," she added, handing him a card. As Raddle strolled down the avenue alone, thinking over her last words, the proffer of mutual assistance did not strike him as in the least peculiar. He was well aware that his own influence was nil, and that she knew it, but the words, "You help me and I'll help you," constituted a Washington formula with which he was familiar, the masonic greeting, in fact, among the Outs. For nowhere else in the world are the two great orders of the Outs and the Ins so sharply separated as in the Capital city.

Raddle had been almost in despair before meeting Madame Corot; this office which he much needed was becoming so elusive, such a pot of gold at the rainbow's foot! He realized that he had no especial talent, but he did know how to wear a silk hat and look like somebody, and what more is needed of a second secretary, especially at Quexlo?

"There are no politics in my case," he reasoned; "what have I to do with politics? I got it before, and I didn't

do anything to help the Democratic party. I live in the District and never vote, and the only interest on earth that I have in the President is that he be some man who will give me this job; otherwise it's all the same to me."

Now that Raddle had met Madame Corot he felt more confident. He was sure that he was to learn how things were really done, that he was to be initiated into the mysteries; he had finally made some progress. While these thoughts occupied his brain he arrived home and told his aunt, with whom he lived, of his adventure.

Mrs. Carleton was a little old woman, as lively as a cricket and as indefatigable as a mosquito. Though sixty years of age, her brain fairly seethed with schemes, and she had planned work for fully forty years to come. But the thing which was chiefly occupying her mind at present was her nephew's candidacy for the second secretaryship. A copy of the State Department Register hung from a nail above her writing-desk, and she knew it by heart; the name of every secretary and consul in the service, the amount of salary and the possibilities from fees in each case.

"You must bring her around to the house," said his aunt. "Madame Corot—h'm!—Madame Corot. I've heard of her. I'll find out exactly who she is. She may have a great deal of influence. If so, you may have to make love to her a little. She's already attracted to you, and if she falls in love with you in earnest she'll raise heaven and earth to get you the job. Then, too, if she'll help us we'll help her."

Raddle looked into the mirror over the mantel and pulled his mustache.

"Do you think—ah—she's really attracted to me?" he asked.

His aunt laughed dotingly.

"You silly boy! She won't be the first one."

He brought Madame Corot to the house the next evening, and the two women found much in common that they could talk of.

"You help us and we'll help you,"

proposed Mrs. Carleton, though she did not know what Madame Corot was up to nor that she needed help. Mrs. Carleton was always "seeing people" or having them seen; not the people themselves, it is true, but people who knew other people, or who were supposed to be able to reach them directly or indirectly. Once she had waited for six months for the arrival of a Michigan man who had promised to talk with the President himself about her nephew. They had hoped so much from this interview and had looked forward to it with such palpitating anxiety! They even drifted into a state of mind in which they regarded the second secretaryship as secured and began to plan their life after Doolittle's talk with the President. Doolittle arrived at last and stayed two days, during which time the President was absent in Colorado, returning a few hours after the Michigan man's departure.

"If Doolittle of Michigan had only got here a little earlier or had stayed a few hours longer," Mrs. Carleton explained to Madame Corot, "Johnny and I would be in Quexlo now. My husband lent Doolittle seven hundred dollars once when he needed it badly and Doolittle's son was a Rough Rider. So there's a chain for reaching the President," cried the sprightly old lady, "without a single missing link!"

Madame Corot smiled approvingly, out of good nature, but she was not greatly impressed. Alas! It took stronger and much more compelling chains than this to get things really done. "But I'm going up to the War Department tomorrow," continued Mrs. Carleton, "to see a man whose wife is an intimate friend of the wife of the Secretary of State's private secretary."

Madame Corot became an almost daily visitor at the house on New Hampshire avenue, dropping in for luncheon or dinner in the most unconventional manner possible. Mrs. Carleton was fundamentally a good housekeeper and to her other activities she added the duties connected

with giving her beloved nephew a good home. Indeed, her chief reason for following him to far distant posts in imagination was that she might make sure that he had a comfortable place to live. In the atmosphere of home Madame Corot seemed to lay off her mysteriousness and to become a simple-minded woman, taking a pathetic interest in the darning of socks and the cooking of sweet potatoes. When she pulled up an armchair—her chair—before the open fire with a sigh of content all suggestion of being “dangerous” disappeared.

Meanwhile Raddle, following his aunt’s advice, paid court to her with much fervor and considerable skill. He had been, he represented, simply overwhelmed, swept off his feet, by her irresistible charms the moment his eyes first rested upon her. The aunt felt no scruples, because no one ever thought of Madame Corot in the light of a victim.

At first Madame Corot did not treat Raddle seriously, but when his earnestness became convincing she assumed a maternal air, and tried to talk him out of his supposed infatuation, always calling him “Johnny,” as though he were a little boy.

“Wouldn’t it be nice,” said Raddle one evening, lifting a soft damp lock from her forehead and twining it gently about his finger, “if I could be restored to the diplomatic service and you could go away with me?”

“If you get back into office,” she replied, “you don’t want an old woman like me tied around your neck.”

“Old!” he cried. “Why keep repeating that to me who thinks you the loveliest, most charming, most beautiful woman in the world?”

“I think, Johnny,” said she, holding her knee between clasped hands as she gazed into the dying fire, “that I shall lock you in a dark closet or put you to bed without any supper if you keep on making love to me. I—I—it awakes the woman in me that I thought was dead, and it makes me unhappy, Johnny—just the least little bit unhappy. I could be perfectly

happy, you know, in a hut in the woods with a man that I loved and that loved me. I could cook, scrub, mend for him, perform any menial task if he but loved me. I am not the woman that the world has made of me—few of us are, I think.”

“But I do love you, Estelle,” he persisted, taking her hand.

“You are a nice boy, Johnny,” she replied, smiling sadly, “and now you may help me on with my wrap and take me home.”

The next day she dropped in at Mrs. Carleton’s with great news.

“The widow is coming! I have just received word from her.”

“The widow?” repeated Mrs. Carleton.

“Yes, my friend, Hermia Galt, of New York. I have often talked with Mr. Raddle about her. Now, there’s the woman for him, if we can get her interested in him.”

“It wouldn’t do her much good, my dear,” laughed Mrs. Carleton. “The poor boy has eyes for no one but you. He talks of you incessantly.”

Madame looked serious. “Oh, we mustn’t let him fall in love with me,” she said; “I am old enough to be his mother—almost.”

“You don’t look over eighteen at this instant,” flattered Mrs. Carleton. And indeed something had dawned in the madame’s face and eyes for the moment that was not akin to age.

“If you really love me, Johnny,” she said to Raddle later, “you will not allow me to get this office for you. I might succeed, but oh, the price! the price!”

That evening she found in her apartments a note from Senator Cartwright, inviting her to lunch with him next day. Her face flushed as she read and grew eager and unfeminine.

“I have got him at last,” she whispered. But a softer look soon came into her eyes, and she murmured in French, “*Mais, si je suis aimée?* Any woman who wears the crown of love is too good for this business.”

She had been working and scheming with all her siren wiles to obtain this

invitation, and now she sat down at her desk and wrote a note of refusal.

The widow Galt arrived from New York and put up at the New Willard. Raddle called upon her there with Estelle and took dinner with the two women. The widow was a tall, slender blond, with a long neck. Her apartments, her gowns, her diamonds, her wines and the carriage, which she kept constantly at beck and call, bore evidence of her wealth. It was rumored that the late Mr. Galt, a New York Board of Trade man, had left her over a million.

"Estelle," she remarked to Madame Corot the second evening after her arrival in Washington, "that poor boy is daft over you. He is really in love with you. What are you going to do with him?"

"I think I shall let him love me," she replied, her hands clasped over one knee, a favorite attitude. "Love is worth more than all else in the world, and when it comes to one at my time of life it is the pearl of exceeding great price."

Going over to the piano she sang a Creole love ditty, a simple little thing for young hearts.

"Ah, well, if he loves you," sighed Hermia, who, like most widows, was sentimental, "you have my blessing. He's a handsome young man, and he certainly has charming manners."

It will be seen from this that Mr. Raddle made a stronger appeal to the sex than he was himself aware of.

"We might get you into the consular service," said Mrs. Carleton one night to her nephew. "There's Naples, for instance. Goodness, Johnny, look at all these fees!"

The State Department Register was open on her lap, and Raddle was glancing over her shoulder. They looked into each other's eyes, now raptly, joyfully. For the moment they imagined themselves at Naples.

"I must read up on Naples," mused Mrs. Carleton. "No doubt one could write a series of magazine articles from there and perhaps give English lessons. How are you coming on with madame?"

Has she promised to see anyone for you yet? She promised to help us if I would help her."

"Women," replied Raddle, "are queer things. The more I convince her of the sincerity of my affection, the less eager she seems to be to do anything for me. By Jove, Aunt Charlotte!" he chuckled, "I'll never get over wondering how I—how a bald-headed and impecunious chap like me could have raised such havoc in the breast of that superb, that extremely sophisticated creature."

"You are too modest," replied his aunt, gazing at him fondly. "You could be a great lady's man if you wished. You have a wonderfully taking way with the women."

"Do you really think so?" he asked earnestly, as though he had been thinking of this same matter before; and then added: "If a fellow really were a lady charmer nothing would be too good for him. Opportunities sometimes arise that a man would be a fool not to take advantage of, if he could."

It was not so very long after this conversation that Mrs. Galt began to wonder whether or not Mr. Raddle were making love to her. At first she took for granted that he held her hand rather longer than necessary and gazed admiringly at her, simply because she was Estelle's friend.

"He likes me," she thought, "because he loves her."

But Mr. Raddle's actions soon set her to doubting on this point. Her eyes were opened particularly by the fact that he sought her society alone, whenever possible, and made her feel that Madame Corot was the third that makes "a crowd."

He put the matter beyond conjecture one night in Estelle's rooms. He had called on the widow, but she had loyally insisted on taking him around to see her friend.

"Madame is out," said the landlady, "but I expect her back every minute. She said you were always to go right into her rooms and make yourselves at home."

They did so.

"Don't you think that's a lovely picture of Estelle?" asked Mrs. Galt, standing before a small oil painting on the mantel. "It was painted by an artist, a friend of hers, now dead. Estelle is a very beautiful woman; no picture can do her justice."

"I suppose she is beautiful," replied Raddle, in a sepulchral tone. "I used to think her so, but I have no eyes for her any more. I—I feel like a criminal, like a blamed scoundrel," he cried passionately, "but I can't help it."

"Can't help what?"

"That I do not love her any more. I do not believe now that I ever loved her. I thought I did, and there is no reason why any man should not love her. She is beautiful and sweet, and all that. Perhaps if you had not come along I should have continued thinking that I did love her. But I see now that she lacks those spiritual charms which make you irresistible to me."

Had Mrs. Galt been a young girl she would have been indignant, but young widows are not surprised at declarations of love from any source.

"'Sh! 'Sh!" she said; "I shall not listen to you. Estelle is my friend, and you must put this silly notion out of your head immediately and never mention it again, or I shall go right back to New York."

He raised his hands in entreaty. They were trembling.

"Oh, do not go away," he cried hoarsely. "I will never speak of it again, if you so command. But do not go away. I live only when in your presence. I—I had no hopes anyway," he faltered, resting his elbow upon the mantel and his forehead in his palm. "I am only a poor devil of a fellow with no prospects, and you are rich and beautiful. What would you want of me? But I tell you now," he cried fiercely, looking at her with burning eyes, "that if you were a poor girl I should win you. You couldn't help yourself. You wouldn't be able to resist such love as mine. I shall never marry Estelle. It wouldn't be fair to her, with my heart full of love for

another woman. I have too much regard for her for that."

The widow glanced uneasily at the door.

"Stop! Stop!" she said. "Estelle will be here in a minute, and she will see that you are agitated over something. You must go right away now; you mustn't remain here another second. I will give you a good talking to some other time."

She managed to get him out of the rooms, and sank into a chair with a sigh of relief, imagining that she had made a diplomatic move.

"Don't worry about it," said Estelle, entering from her bedroom. "I heard all and do not blame you at all." She was smiling, but was white to the lips. "You can have him. I give him up to you freely. It would be a shame if you did not take him, for the poor fellow loves you, there's not a doubt about that."

"Nonsense!" said Hermia, rising and putting her arms around her friend "He loves you. This is but a passing madness, an infatuation, and I will soon cure him of it. You are so much more beautiful than I, I am sure he loves you. He can't help it."

Madame Corot behaved admirably, permitting herself but one little shaft of bitterness, which was quite excusable under the circumstances.

"He can't be after your money, Hermia," she said sweetly, as her friend was leaving. "He was too earnest for that!"

The shaft took effect, for it was aimed at a tender spot. Like many another rich woman, Hermia was haunted by the ever present fear that it was her money and not herself which formed the real attraction among her admirers.

"Estelle is spiteful as a cat," she murmured; "if Mr. Raddle loves me instead of her I'm sure I can't help it. I haven't given him the least encouragement, I'm sure. His eyes were positively beautiful tonight when he was pleading with me."

Mr. Raddle remembered Hermia's promise to give him "a good talking

to," so he lost no time in calling upon her again. He remembered that he had seemed to be making something of an impression on the previous occasion, so he resumed the same line of attack. The widow was kind, and, there being no danger of an audience now, was quite at her ease.

"It is disloyal for me even to listen to you," she murmured; "Estelle is my best friend."

"There is no disloyalty in it," he replied, "because in any case I shall not marry Estelle. I regard her too highly. How could I marry another woman, with your beautiful image always in my mind? Every kiss, every caress that I gave her would be for you—oh, it would be terrible!"

"Poor Estelle!" sighed the widow; "somehow I feel to blame in this, yet I cannot see how. You—you were speaking of my money," she continued sweetly, "and you really touched me. It was so noble of you to wish that I were a poor girl! It is no wonder that you appeal to women—with such noble sentiments. I feel that I ought to tell you; my husband left all his money to me on condition that I remained single. He feared that I might fall a victim to some adventurer. If I marry again it all goes to found an eye and ear hospital in Indianapolis. You know the poor man was as deaf as a post."

"Wa-was he?" gasped Raddle. "No, I did not know. What a dreadful affliction deafness is! To lose the sight of your ears and not to be able to see what people are saying to you! You—you say he founded this asylum in Indianapolis? What do you advise one to do for deafness? My poor aunt is growing deaf."

The widow laughed merrily. He was embarrassed, terribly embarrassed, and evidently desirous of leading the conversation to the subject of deafness and of keeping it there. He stammered along for about five minutes, much to her enjoyment, when she remarked shyly, in the midst of an agonizing pause: "I would readily sacrifice everything my husband left me for

love. What is a little money if two people love?"

"What, indeed?" cried Raddle. "Nothing! I heard of a man once and a man shouted to him, 'It's a pleasant day!' and this man was deaf and the man had to shout it half a dozen times, and when the man found out that the man was only saying, 'It's a pleasant day,' he only grunted, he was so disgusted. Well, I must be going. Good night, Mrs. Galt."

As he walked down the street the late Mr. Galt seemed a living and malignant enemy, who was enjoying Raddle's discomfiture with a Mephistophelian grin.

As Madame Corot did not appear at his aunt's house for several days, he called upon her. He found her quite pleasant, but different, somehow. There was a smile in her eyes, but it was not the old smile of tenderness. He arose to go at last, awkwardly, and she followed him to the door.

"Poor Johnny!" she laughed gaily, "you are not shrewd enough to cope with women. Mrs. Galt's husband left her only a hundred thousand dollars. She has a million in her own right. And you had made such havoc with her tender young heart! It's a pity all round that you couldn't have been less stupid."

The next day Raddle and his aunt were walking along the Rock Creek Road together.

"Why," exclaimed Mrs. Carleton, "I do believe that was Senator Cartwright in that carriage with Madame Corot! He can get you into office by a single word."

"Oh, I've botched things all up with the madame," confessed Raddle. "I'm a chump, an all-wool and yard-wide chump, that's what I am. I haven't brains enough to fill a hollow pin-head." And he explained.

His aunt looked at him fondly.

"It all comes of your being too fascinating, Johnny," she said cheerfully and admiringly. "But never mind. I am going to see a woman tomorrow who will see the President's wife for us!"

DESOLATION

I WEARY of the burden of these days,
 These heavy days when we are far apart.
 No empty winning in the worldly mart
 Can ever profit us; no idle praise
 Can compensate us for our love's delays.
 There come from Life's dark forest where thou art
 Only the echoes of my crying heart—
 Thy lone cries borne along the barren ways.

Outside the brooding fold of thine embrace
 The sunbeams burn me and the shades affright.
 I am a wind-blown meteor in space
 Robbed of the guidance of thy love's great light.
 My life without the beacon of thy face
 Is wasted on the ways of outer night.

ELSA BARKER.



A CONDITION

"I HAVE not much to offer you."

The youthful lover sighed as he spoke, looking down humbly into the eyes of the beautiful girl who was so dear to him.

"No, darling," he continued. "My father left me only eight hundred millions and the interest in his business. My family, as you know, is not as old as it might be, our utmost efforts to trace it beyond the Conquest being hitherto unrewarded. But such as I have, as little as it is, is yours to struggle on with as you will."

She gazed at him trustfully.

"Never mind, darling," she said. "I will take you, just as you are, on one condition."

"And that?" he murmured anxiously.

"Is this," she replied earnestly, "that you don't ask me to use my position in society to support you by playing bridge."



OTHER PEOPLE'S BUSINESS

JENNY—Their engagement has been broken by mutual consent.

KATE—Isn't that tantalizing! I'll never be satisfied until I find out which one broke it.

HARMONY JACK

By Grace MacGowan Cooke

“YOU keep the ranch till you can pull yourself together, Van Cott; I’m not going to dispossess a man just because he’s new to the work and has made some mistakes. I can wait for the interest, as well as the principal.”

“Pull myself together!” echoed the other. “And when I get myself together what have I got? Why, I’ve got a man that knows nothing about the business; a man as bound to fail as you are to succeed, Golden.”

As Van Cott finished, the tall fellow in the dress of a ranch rider rose from the table and strode uneasily to the window. “I won’t foreclose,” he reiterated. “Think of something better.”

“I don’t deny that it would be an accommodation,” began Van Cott again, trying his speech word by word, as a cautious pedestrian tries a rickety bridge, plank by plank. “I bought this place to bring my wife out, on account of the climate. She’s gone—poor Lucy—but I did want to have her sister with me for one season. It would—it would do wonders for the girl. She’s had a hard time. She’s disappointed and disheartened.” He glanced up at Golden’s irresponsive back and pushed a framed photograph across the table. “That’s her picture—she’s a good-looker, isn’t she?”

The young ranchman, rich, successful, as inexperienced as a child concerning such nets as were now being spread for him, took up the picture and studied it. The simplicity which the fashionable woman has of late affected fostered the impression Van Cott had been clumsily putting forward. The

eyes looked out from the photograph, dark, grave, direct, almost melancholy; and poor Golden’s heart gave a throb of sympathy for the girl who was disappointed and unhappy.

“You’d like her,” Van Cott went on, “and she’s crazy about this life out here and all I’ve told her of the people. I’d like to keep the ranch long enough to have her here with me awhile.”

Like an evil vapor or an ugly odor, the shameful understanding invaded Golden’s consciousness that the Eastern man was offering his sister-in-law as a final payment on the ranch. Before his mind flitted the accounts he had heard of how beautiful young women were as certainly bought and sold in the fashionable world of today as in an Eastern slave market. His lips had parted for a short, sharp denial of the other’s hinted request, when his eyes fell once more on the photograph. Was it her fault? She looked like a good woman—she plainly was not a happy one. Her sheer loveliness, too, laid a strong hold on him. He stood for a moment silent, then spoke again:

“You may bring the lady out here—you may stay on the ranch as long as you please, if you’ll agree to my terms—my arrangement,” he said bluntly. “I’m going—” He hesitated. “I’m leaving here for Old Mexico for six weeks. I guess she can finish her visit before I get back. If she likes this life I’ll not deny her a chance to enjoy it nor stand in the way of your entertaining her.”

He looked down at his brown hand upon the table. He held his gaze there by sheer force of will for a mo-

ment, but it once more traveled, evidently without his consent, to the pictured face. The black eyes looked at him reproachfully; the sweet lips seemed folded over many things they would have told to him, ungracious. "If your sister-in-law should choose to marry some cow-puncher and remain in this country," he went on in a very low tone, "the ranch is yours—you may take it as a gift from her."

"Is that a bet?" inquired Van Cott doubtfully. "If so, I— No, I don't think I'll take you."

"It's not a bet," returned Golden shortly. "You may take it or leave it—the offer remains. Send for Miss Hexter; I'm off for Old Mexico—I think I'll leave Tres Pinos and everything in charge of Harmony Jack."

Van Cott threw back his head with a shout of laughter, which the sight of the other's serious face suddenly checked. "This is a plain matter," said the Westerner. "I see your game—and I'll have none of it. A woman can't be offered to me like a filly or a heifer. You take what I promise you, and that's all you get from me." And he strode out, leaving Van Cott between irritation and amusement.

II

SHE was particularly well groomed; from the top of her sleek dark head, with its rich roll of straight black hair, which one would have felt rather impertinent to call a pompadour, to the hem of her speckless white linen, she was immaculate—"the latest thing in morning dress for young ladies."

If she had been set in the Casino, with the beach and its bathers before her, if she had been looking off over the links at Lenox, there would have been nothing specially remarkable about her, except that she was *The Thing As It Should Be*.

But she sat upon the rickety porch of a New Mexican ranch house, a desolate, squalid little adobe building huddled mendicant-like on a treeless

flat. She looked not at links or beach, but over a vast browbeating plain; and she was as little afraid of it, as composed in the face of its difficulties, as she had been all her twenty-two years of life in the face of the human world.

Such a woman, in such attire, was as odd in her situation as a tiger walking in the snow; yet she somehow seemed appropriate by sheer force of her personal poise and harmony. In the intervals of writing upon a letter held on the tablet in her lap, the grave black eyes interrogated the endless levels quietly.

"You lived through, didn't you?" called a gay voice in one of these moments of industry. The black eyes looked up from their writing, to find themselves confronted by a pair of laughing blue orbs, long-lashed and set in a sunburned countenance that she could but remember. This was a cowboy whom she and her brother-in-law had encountered as they drove over from the railway, and who had accompanied them home and remained for dinner the night before. If memory served her Van Cott had called him "Harmony Jack." He was riding a different horse this morning, and he was good to see, in his carefully careless garb, the pony groomed like a cavalryman's mount.

"I lived through," she echoed gravely. "Won't you come in, Mr.—?"

"Jack—Harmony Jack. Everybody has a nickname out here, you know."

"Except myself—and I'm a new-comer," the girl returned, smiling slightly as the man flung himself from his horse and, leaving the animal standing, the bridle trailing on the ground before him, sat down on the porch edge below her.

"Oh, you've got yours all right. I nicknamed you last night, and it stuck."

The man leaned his head back against one of the rough porch posts, his big white cowboy hat on his lap, the sun glinting on his yellow hair and thick, up-curved eyelashes.

"Would you mind telling me—?" she began, with a note of formality.

"Not a bit," he returned easily. "You're 'the Queen of Sheba.' Van Cott said it was a fit."

An unaccustomed red came into the girl's clear, dark cheek. "It was very silly of me to wear such a gown. My brother should have told me—I myself should have known better; but dinner has always meant a dinner frock to me; and I——"

"Oh, no apologies are in order. We think the best is none too good for us out here. We liked the dress—a frock you called it, didn't you?—we liked the frock and the wearer. They seemed to go together. I don't know that I called you the Queen of Sheba on account of that though," thoughtfully.

"What particular queenly attributes of mine, then?" The girl was dimpling and smiling now, with a tempered deliciousness.

"Queenly? Oh, I don't know; it was the circumstances, I guess."

"Circumstances?"

"Why, you know there was Solomon. He had three hundred wives—range count, I reckon—and when Sheba brought her outfit into his pastures he just sided her, and left those three hundred ladies to entertain each other; he couldn't see one of them."

Miss Hexter passed lightly over this tribute to her charms. It was evident to her that New Mexico had its own sort of pretty speeches. "I haven't met any gentleman with three hundred—" she was beginning, when the newcomer interrupted:

"You aren't likely to see many Mexicano ranchmen with three hundred wives," he agreed. "A man thinks he's lucky out here to get one. It's even hard for a man that's been raised in these parts to imagine such an overstocked market of connubial felicity. But if a fellow can imagine a thing like that"—he threw back his head with that movement which seemed characteristic and looked at her directly, innocently, as a child

looks—"it seems to me that you'd be like the Queen of Sheba, and that when you came along he'd leave those dear ladies lamenting. That's why I gave you the name."

"Nonsense," laughed Miss Hexter. "You've gone all that way around, and invented all that stuff, to escape acknowledging that you called me the Queen of Sheba because my gown was too fine for the occasion last night."

Harmony Jack did not deny the impeachment. "The frock wasn't too fine for the wearer," he said softly.

For an hour or more these two sat on the porch and talked together. The girl's mind, in spite of her culture, of what one might call her sophistication, was nearly as primitive as the man's; and they harmonized in a certain directness and largeness of view which belonged to both.

"Say," said Harmony Jack, with a child's unconscious sigh, "I'd been saving up all these things for years to say to you, hadn't I?"

"Not any more than I had been saving up my answers, I think," returned Miss Hexter gaily.

"Oh, but you've been out among a lot of people all your life," the man said. "Having somebody—somebody you like to talk to and that savvys something above the cattle business, isn't the absolute novel shock to your sensibilities that it is to mine."

"Yes," said the girl, looking dreamily off across the plain, "I've been brought up in public, as you might say. I've been taught that the business of life was to keep gabbling; but after all, we never said anything to each other."

"What did you talk about, at those places you'd go to? Receptions and balls, and—and—well, the opera. If you trust the funny papers, fashionable New York people do a lot of their talking at the opera. You spoke of things," a little wistfully, "that I wouldn't know the first word about, would I?"

"We didn't," protested Miss Hexter; "we didn't talk about things at all;

we talked about nothings—when we didn't talk about people."

"You know a lot," murmured the man admiringly; "but there are a good many things—about the life out here—that are right interesting, and that I can tell you."

"Indeed there are," returned the young lady, with a warmth of which she was scarcely conscious. "We'll just resolve ourselves into a mutual information bureau and complete each other's education." Did her mind misgive her that she might teach this man, in a sphere so utterly removed from her own, too much?

"Well, I must be going," declared the cowboy, rising and looking down at his hostess. "I'll come for my next lesson tomorrow, and I'll bring a horse. I want you to ride, so that I can have a chance to make a fair exchange of information. Will you be at home in the morning?"

"I'll be at home in the morning. Where on earth could I go?" smiled the girl. "You at the Tres Pinos are the only neighbors we have within forty miles, Sully tells me."

The man called "Cinco!" scarcely raising his voice. The pony tossed up his head and trotted forward to the porch edge, cleverly holding his head on one side to avoid the trailing bridle reins. Miss Hexter noticed the superb workmanship of the Mexican saddle, with its tapideros and embroidered saddle blanket. She knew too little of the country to be aware that the man himself was dressed in garments more expensive than those that clothe an Eastern clubman. He swung himself into the saddle, pushed the pony to the porch edge, where he was on a level with the girl, and turned to shake hands. There was something in the situation that inevitably suggested a lover's parting.

"I was wondering—" he began, and broke off. He sat so long silent, still looking down at her, that the girl flushed uneasily.

"You were wondering whether it would rain tomorrow?—what time it was?"

"I was wondering"—and his big voice dropped to a very soft, low note—"I was just wondering how poor old Solomon felt when the Queen of Sheba went home."

Then he was gone, too skilful to risk an anticlimax. She stood looking after him for a moment, as the morning sun caught and flashed on one bit of his accoutrement or another, lingering nowhere so long as in the thick, close-cropped yellow hair.

"Sully told me I should find some queer fish," she said to herself. "But," she added in a tone of self-justification, "he certainly said that I was to be civil to all of them."

And if she were aware of having been more than civil to Harmony Jack her placid young face gave no evidence of the fact.

III

MISS DOROTHY HEXTER sat at breakfast with her brother-in-law. "When am I to see the man?" she asked, buttering her sour-dough biscuit with a leisurely hand.

"The man!" echoed Van Cott irritably. "Lord, Dot! I should think you'd seen men enough since you've been here."

"Cowboys," corrected his sister-in-law. "I was wondering when you were going to present the owner of Tres Pinos."

"And the owner—the practical owner—of this ranch. Don't forget that, my dear Dorothy. This ranch and several others, besides his gold and silver mines. Hang it, but he's a lucky beggar."

Miss Hexter looked at her brother-in-law with distaste. "You mean he's lucky because I desire to meet him," she suggested smoothly.

Van Cott chuckled. "You women can twist anything into a compliment," he commented.

"I can't twist the behavior of your man of Tres Pinos into a compliment," retorted Miss Hexter. "I don't think he's particularly anxious to make my acquaintance. It would seem as if

you might have been mistaken in your——”

“Well, he’s—away, just at present,” cut in Van Cott hastily. “You seem deucedly well entertained with your cow-punchers and such.” He shot a quick, keen glance at her composed face. “Hang it all, Ah Sin! bring me some coffee with coffee in it—this stuff’s slop,” he said to the attending Chinaman, pushing aside his cup with a shaking hand. Van Cott’s morning head needed more potent waters than any Ah Sin was likely to bring.

“Too weak to run out of the coffee-pot if there was a hole in it,” suggested Miss Hexter.

“That’s one of Harmony Jack’s jokes,” laughed Van Cott, with another sharp, examining glance. “You seem to have struck up quite a friendship with——with——”

Miss Hexter raised her dark eyes and looked very squarely at her brother-in-law.

“—with a good many of these cow-punchers,” he concluded.

“You told me to be civil to all of them; and I find them extremely amusing. The little Scotchman—by the way, if he comes in for the title, he would have no trouble in marrying money—isn’t nearly such good fun as the natives.”

“You don’t want to get your affections tangled up with any of these——”

Miss Hexter rose and looked down at her brother-in-law disgustedly as she pushed her napkin back in place upon the table. “My dear Sully,” she remonstrated, “one would think to hear you talk that I was a schoolgirl enjoying her first taste of masculine society. Pray remember that I have been through three New York seasons and that I belong to the Hexter family, never known to set sentiment above advantage. Add to your reflections that I’ve not been a success in getting off, and that the entire family has clubbed together to capitalize the scheme of sending me out here to you—to New Mexico—to mend the family fortunes by this rich marriage.”

“Oh, come now! You put it bru-

tally—women always do when their pride’s touched.” He was a dull man, with a long drab face, flushed under its natural gray by heavy drinking. He took his big head in his two hands, and looked at his young sister-in-law reproachfully.

“You Hexters *have* married con-foundedly well,” he ruminated. “Even poor Lucy. Hang it all! I had a pot of money when Lucy married me.”

Miss Hexter was angry enough to say that one fact bespoke the other; but she was quite too well-bred. She merely bent her head with a little frosty smile.

“My dear Sully,” she repeated, “you are addressing a modern young woman who finds herself getting shop-worn upon the matrimonial bargain counter. I might go to the theatre to be amused; I might seek my modiste to indulge my taste for beauty; I should carry neither expectation into my matrimonial plans.”

Van Cott rose with a little, jarring laugh. “Oh, God—you women! You’re all alike. I suppose the hint in that speech is that matrimony is cold business.”

Before Dorothy’s mind came a vision of two honest blue eyes, merry, tender, brave, looking from a sun-burned face. She could see the curve of the red lips under the blond mustache, the flash of the white teeth over which they parted so readily. An honest, vivid face, young—so young—so full of that immortal youth which would never die out of it, which is pressed out of the hearts and faces of men by the great grinding wheels of city life. She answered almost fiercely, answered more than visioned face than her brother-in-law’s words:

“You know, Sully, that it *has* to be business with me. I’m not situated so that I can indulge in sentiment.”

IV

“SHE’LL turn you down,” said Van Cott, with an ugly grin. “Lord, you might have known it—expect a woman

to be disinterested—around here doing the Claudé Melnotte act——”

“Hold up,” interrupted Harmony Jack. “I’ve had just all I can take of that, Van Cott.”

The elder man was sore and angry. His own advantage openly lay in marrying his sister-in-law to John Golden. He regarded the ranchman as a person able and—if he thought so—willing to buy. His sister-in-law, as he himself would have phrased it, “had the goods to deliver.” She was even handsomer and more fascinating than Golden had any right to expect. This little comedy which endangered the legitimate results of the plan galled what Van Cott called his plain common sense.

Suddenly he came to a decision, and his manner changed; he slapped the other on the shoulder.

“It’ll be all right, my boy; I’d gamble on it. The girl doesn’t know her own mind yet. Don’t ask her today—give her till tomorrow—ask her then.”

The inference was too obvious, and instantly the ranchman towered above his short, rotund adviser. “You say one word to influence her decision, and by God! I’ll wring your neck,” he retorted savagely.

Van Cott with a rueful face rubbed the shoulder upon which the other’s grasp had been set, and in his heart anger mounted against the pair of them. “Did I even suggest such a thing?” he inquired sullenly. “Run it your own way, you great, overbearing idiot. So far, you’ve certainly made a nice mess of it.”

They had been waiting for the girl to come out for her usual afternoon ride, and Van Cott watched with sullen eyes as Dorothy was put upon her pony and the pair rode away. Beautifully matched, even his unsentimental soul rated them, with something akin in their poise and simplicity of manner.

Meantime the ponies loped easily together, and Dorothy stole a look at her companion’s profile. She had long since promoted him from the ranks of a pastime, something pleasant to be exploited and forgotten, to that position he had set himself to win, of a man to

be reckoned with, one to be considered as a possible mate. And now his impatience bade fair to spoil all. He was showing her plainly that he was ready to offer her a share in his lot of poverty, toil and hardship—that he would offer it to her without apology, without any softening of its angles or objections—offer it to her—Dorothy Hexter! Common sense prompted the swift putting of him in his place. She wondered at herself to be so moved, so dominated, by an ordinary cowboy—poor, perplexed Dorothy could not know how extraordinary a cowboy Harmony Jack was.

He took, from the first, the upper hand, assuming that she belonged to him, and that she was merely making some permissible feminine delays in her capitulation. When he had put the matter before her with such plainness as she would permit, she began:

“You see one phase of my character here, Jack, and people at home in New York see an entirely different side. You would not recognize the Dorothy Hexter of that existence; she would be a creature foreign to all your ideas.” This as a preface to that “no” which she must eventually say.

The big man reached over and took one gauntleted hand in his. “People feel that way about themselves, you know,” he reassured her; “but the fact is that you would be you—for me—wherever you were and whatever you were doing.”

This was not a hopeful beginning; and Miss Hexter fell away from her ideal of what this interview should be by letting the hand remain clasped and proposing the postponement of all personal discussion till they had raced together and he had given her his usual lesson in the handling of a rope. So it came about that they were drawing close to the house when she again felt it necessary to begin.

“I can’t make you understand about me. You think I’m just—well, that I’m honest and direct, and all that.”

“I sure know it,” rejoined Harmony Jack in a contented tone; “and when you make me a promise you’ll keep it.”

"My specialty is supposed to be avoiding the making of promises—I don't break them," agreed Miss Hexter.

"But you'll make one to me," asserted the man, with a ring of confidence in his deep voice. "It's mighty little I have to offer you, from some points of view; but I love you better than any man ever will—that's so. You're charming and you're dear; but a fellow with a life full of beautiful things can't feel toward you as I do. It's a sacrifice for you to take a cow-puncher like me—well, say it is. I'm not afraid to ask you to make it. I'm not afraid you'll regret it; you're not the regretting kind. There are lots of chances for a man here in the West. I'll be whatever you want me to—but I can't be it without you."

She had tried to stem the tide of this speech, but it would not be silenced. It had occurred to her for the first time that this man, from his own point of view, was offering her a great deal. Now she began slowly, with a very pale face:

"I ought to have told you before—I want you to hear now—why I came to New Mexico."

"Never mind that, Dorothy," he said softly, lifting her from her pony at the ranch house door. "I've brought you back home. Are you willing to go in with me and say to Van Cott—?"

They halted in the bare little room which was called a parlor at the ranch house, and served for many other purposes.

"I want to tell you," the girl began, with slowly crimsoning cheeks, "why I came out here. John Golden, the owner of Tres Pinos, has a mortgage on this ranch—and—of course you know—he's a very rich man."

The words stuck in her throat. It was not alone that she loved this simple fellow before her—though she now admitted the fact freely to herself—it was something more, which made it hard to explain the thing to him; and yet it must be done.

"I came out here to marry that

man," she burst forth. "I made my plans for it, just as you would go up to Magdalena to buy cattle. My brother-in-law wrote me of him. Of him! He wrote little enough to me of the man; he wrote me concerning his possessions, that he thought I could make the running—seeing that he had never been about much nor met many women of my type."

"Yes?" assented the other. He had not drawn near to her, he had not tried to touch her as she stood, eagerly, passionately tearing down, with trembling hands, the structure of his respect for her, and, as she half hoped, half dreaded, of his love as well.

"Isn't that enough? Do you want such a woman as that? Could such a woman as that want you? I haven't succeeded in marrying John Golden, I haven't made the attempt, only because the man is not here—my intention was good."

"Oh, no," murmured Harmony Jack, with a laugh in his blue eyes, "it wasn't that—it's because I was here. Do I want you?" the big voice, honey-sweet, dropped to its lowest vibrant tone. "Oh, dearest, I'll be a hundred years trying to show you how much I want you!"

"It isn't that alone, Jack." She flung out a hand as though to push him away. "I'm not saying yes. You won't understand. It isn't that I don't care for you; but that's the way I've regarded things always. I've been brought up to such ideals. I'm not sure I've got over it."

He answered softly: "You've been brought up to look at things that way, and if you can say you're willing to marry a cow-puncher that gets forty dollars a month and his board, and"—with a sudden flash of laughter—"offers to share both of them with you, I'll tell you what I think, my little girl; I think you're one woman in a thousand."

She drew a swift breath and tried to call prudence, reason, Hexter pride to her aid. Useless, vain and foolish! They fled away, pitiful and shrunken, and left her half exultant and half

dismayed at the new sense of freedom, at the new creature within her which rose up defiantly and went forward with direct, unfaltering steps to meet the honesty of the man before her, who stood meanwhile waiting for her word.

Slowly she raised her eyes. As they met his he saw that her shaken citadel had fallen.

"Oh, dearest!" he cried under his breath, and would have caught her to him.

"Wait!" she said, staying him with a forbidding hand, as a wave of distrust broke over her again; "wait; you are not sure of me yet—because I can't be sure of myself. I'll answer you when I tell Sully."

Perhaps her underthought was that with Sully's presence she might come back to sanity and her usual point of view. Be that as it may, the man moved toward the back of the house, and it is to be recorded that she followed, drawn by the hand which her lover held in his own.

Van Cott was sitting on the rickety back porch, smoking. He was, as he himself would have phrased it, a drink or two ahead, and he looked them up and down with a delighted chuckle—things were coming his way at last.

"By the Lord!" he laughed, "this breaks the record. Dorothy Hexter trotting out to announce to me that she's decided to marry a cow-puncher!"

The girl drew back with crimson cheeks, her pride and sense of fitness shocked, her slowly roused but implacable temper proving her lover's best ally. "Sully!" she ejaculated.

That worthy slapped his knee and laughed. "I see you, in my mind's eye, dragging around from dugout to shack in the wake of this beautiful cow-puncher! Oh, Dot, it's immense!"

Again came the warning "Sully!" from his sister-in-law, but success had quite turned Van Cott's head. "You're an elegant specimen, you are," he pursued, turning to Harmony Jack. "I reckon I was the biggest fool this side of New York when I admitted you to my house and my table, where this innocent young creature was."

Dorothy looked at her lover's countenance of rage and embarrassment. Van Cott was the only happy member of the trio.

"You have lost your chance to interfere, Sully," she said, with chill hauteur. "He has asked me to marry him; and"—defiantly—"I shall say yes!"

"You will?" inquired Van Cott. "Well, the Hexters always land on their feet. It won't be long now till you learn what this great idiot has been at so much pains to keep from you; that everybody out here has a nickname, and that the nickname of John Golden, proprietor of Tres Pinos, is Harmony Jack."



PERFECTLY DREADFUL

"**H**ERE," said Mrs. Bickers, who had been reading the paper, "is an account of a man who chopped his wife up and fed her to the chickens. Wasn't that perfectly dreadful?"

"I should say it was," replied Bickers. "I hope the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals got on his trail immediately."

THE SIREN

By Arthur Davison Ficke

HIS pale blue flowers are withered quite, I know;
And on the hills no more the lilies blow.
Perhaps there lingers on the seashore yet
Some lonely poppy by the mists made wet,
Swaying its weary petals to and fro. . . .
I saw it all—so very long ago.

So long ago, perhaps it was a dream!
Here in the silence where the slow tides stream
Time has no pulses, and the distant beat
Of waves makes dull the sound of the night's feet,
And life itself grows breathless, till it seems
A flow of night-wind shadows or gray dreams.

For him who stood that day beside the foam,
Swift days and nights go by his woodland home
And change the leaves and poppies and blue flowers
I saw in that most sweet of all my hours—
That hour that comes like blossoms seaward blown,
Wreathing my forehead as I sit alone.

'Twas sunrise as I rose upon the waves,
Rose from the ancient silence of the caves,
And saw with wonder the low summer shore
Mine eyes had never looked upon before,
And saw the ripple on the shells that pave
The shores round which the blue, bright waters lave.

And then I saw him standing, facing me,
Sit with the dawn-light of the sun and sea,
Fair with the softness of the purple skies
In the love-tender glory of his eyes.
And I who had lured men to wreck-strewn seas
At last grew faint with love's sharp ecstasies.

I knew him and I loved him; and the thrill
Of sweet new passion made my singing still.
Silent I raised toward him my yearning hands,
My breast more white than flowers of summer lands.
And in his eyes grew light like that which fills
The whole wide glory of the summer hills.

I loved him and I called him . . . and he came!
 The light swayed dizzily; then sudden flame
 Flashed to his face a pale, awakening dread;
 He turned in deadly silent fear and fled;
 And I, struck through by some bewildering pain,
 Murmured love's sweetest sobbing words in vain.

The shore grew still; ebb-tide began to flow.
 The lilies seemed less splendidly to blow.
 Some step had passed there all too fleetingly
 And left the blue flowers withering by the sea,
 Battering their weary petals to and fro. . . .
 I saw it all—so very long ago.



LITERARY ITEM

THE Ladies' Literary Club met yesterday afternoon at Mrs. Percy Robinson's.

Miss Gladys Pepperton told all she knew about the doings of the woman who has moved in next door to her and whose husband was away on business.

Mrs. Sanderson Somerset gave the inside history of the feud between the contralto and the parson.

Mrs. Sibyll Backus ripped up the back an old friend who hadn't treated her well.

Miss Flora Faberton announced three engagements and begged everyone not to mention it.

Mrs. Upperton Singster told of the last fight she had with her cook.

Mrs. Appleton Appleby brought a new baby gown which she is doing herself, and which was much admired.

Miss Sadie Saltpetre gave the inside history of how Mrs. Dumbleton's husband had lost all his money in Wall Street.

Mrs. Stringer-Stringer's paper on the relation of Greek art to the Italian Renaissance was listened to with breathless interest. There was time to read only half of it, but the other half will undoubtedly be read next week.



DECIDEDLY

"SPEAKING of the theatre of war—" began Bellingham, when Goldthorpe interrupted:

"That is the only theatre where back seats are desirable."



MRS. VON BLUMER—Why don't you take Peterkin out in your auto?
 VON BLUMER—Good heavens! Why, I'm trying to sell it to him.

THE ETERNAL DUEL

By James Huneker

THE face set him to strange wonderings; he sat at the coffin and watched it. His wife's face it was, and above the sorrow of the irrevocable parting floated the thought that she did not look happy as she lay in her bed of death. Monross had seen but two dead faces before; they were those of his father and mother. Both had worn upon the mask which death models an expression of relief. But this face, the face of his wife, the woman with whom he had lived—how many years!—he asked himself why he shuddered when he looked down at it, shuddered and also flushed with indignation. Had she been ever happy? How many times had she not voiced her feelings in the unequivocal language of love! Yet she seemed so hideously unhappy as she stretched before him in her white robes of death. Why? What secret was this disclosed at the twelfth hour of life, on the very brink of the grave? Did death, then, hold the solution to the enigma of the conquering Sphinx!

Monross, master of psychology, tormented by visions of perfection, a victim to the devouring illusion of the artist, Monross asked himself with chagrin if he had missed the key in which had sounded the symphony of this woman's life. This woman! His wife! A female creature, long-haired, smiling, loquacious—though reticent enough when her real self should have flashed out signals of recognition at him—this wife, the Rhoda he had called day and night—what had she been?

She had understood him, had realized his nobility of ideal, his gift, his

occasional grandeur of soul—like all artistic men he was desultory in the manifestation of his talent; and had read aloud to him those poems written in the pitch-hot passion of his youth—before he had met her. To her he had been always, so he told himself, a cavalier in his devotion. Without wealth, he had kept the soles of her little feet from touching the sidewalks of life. Upon her dainty person he had draped lovely garments. Why then, he wondered, the vindictive expression etched as if in aqua fortis upon her carved features?

Some old-world superstition held Monross captive as he gazed. Death is the grand revealer, he thought; death alone stamps upon the crumbling canvas of mortality the truth. Rhoda was dead. Yet her face was alive for the first time. He saw its truth; and again he shuddered, for he also discerned the hate that had lurked a life long in its devious and smiling expressions—expressions like a set of scenery pushed on and off as the order of the play demanded. Oh, the misery of it all! He, Monross, lover, poet, egoist, husband, to be confronted by this damnable defiance, this newly born hate! What had he done! And in the brain cells of the man there awakened a processional fleet of pictures: Rhoda wooed; Rhoda dazzled; Rhoda won; Rhoda smiling before the altar; Rhoda resigned at that other altar; Rhoda, wife, mother, and Rhoda—dead!

But Rhoda loved—again he looked at the face. The brow was virginally placid, the drooping, bitter mouth alone telling the unhappy husband a

story he had never before suspected. Rhoda! Was it possible that this exquisite tiny creature had harbored rancor in her soul for the man who had adored her because she adored him? Rhoda! The shell of his egoism fell away from him. He saw the implacable resentment of this tender girl who, her married life long, had loathed the captain invading the citadel of her soul, the conqueror that had filched her virgin zone. The woman seemingly stared at the man through lids

closed in death—the woman, the sex that had ages ago feared the barbarian who dragged her to his cave, subdued her, made her bake his bread and bear his children.

In a wide heaven of surmise Monross read the confirmation—the eternal duel of the male and the female; saw that Rhoda had hated him most when most she trembled at his master bidding. And Rhoda lay dead in her lyre-shaped coffin, saying these ironic things to her husband when it was too late.



THE BRAVEST LOVER

HOW bravest that brave lover is
 Who loves all things beneath the sun,
 Then finds all women in just one,
 And finds all fortunes in one kiss!
 How wisely born, how more than wise,
 How wisely learned must be that soul
 Who loves all earth, all paradise,
 All peoples, places, pole to pole,
 Yet in one kiss includes the whole!

JOAQUIN MILLER.



A GREAT LOSS

THE NEW COOK—What time do you have breakfast?
 MRS. HIGHBLOWER—At seven-thirty.
 “Well, Oi’m sorry Oi can’t be wid ye.”



IT is not well for man to be alone—until he has been married long enough to appreciate solitude.

THE OTHER THING

By Virginia Woodward Cloud

“A HA! A fire is good! 'Twere not a bad idea this, to elude our excellent Dorminorf and ride ahead for a breathing spell. They think me at Bleint ere this. Send everyone away, Germaine! Who needs a swarm of lackeys in the heart of the woods? And why are you here, boy?”

Prince Krauntz of Bleint stretched his feet to the flames and looked up at a pale, dark-haired youth who stood in the chimney-corner beside him.

“That your highness should find congenial society awaiting you, did you please to stop here tonight *pour prendre congé*.”

“Screaming devils! Throw a log on and shut the door! So you deem yourself congenial society, Sir Scribe? Do you not know that my grandfather—honor to his majesty—would have kept you as fool because of your tongue?”

“'Twere the same thing, your highness. Were it not for fools, would kings appear wise?”

“Death and darkness, hear him!”

“In good time, your highness, but—*aujourd'hui après mon prince!*”

Krauntz of Bleint threw his head back, and the candlelight leaped to illumine his blond curls as he laughed aloud.

“Germaine, you are an impertinent brat, an incorrigible bookworm, the son of a thousand years and”—the eyes of the other suddenly met his own, and those of the boy were adoring in their fervor—“a shield, boy! Your hand! You would have taken the bullet that was meant for me, when

that which we call fate threw you before me.”

“In return, my dear master, you have given me a home and books. I kiss your hand! We are quits.”

“Bah!” The prince ran his fingers lightly through the dark hair that was now bowed at his knee. “I spoil you sadly, Germaine, but that were a poor return for your loyalty and faith, the most needful traits in a friend and retainer.”

“And which a prince requires most of all on his last free night,” said the youth.

“Pest! What do you mean, boy?”

“An old rhyme, your highness—

“He who weds where no love is,
Slavery and bondage his.”

“Germaine, you presume!” A black line drew Prince Krauntz’s brow quickly.

“Love never presumes, your highness. Have you not shown me as much about tomorrow’s betrothal?”

The prince folded his arms and looked into the fire, speaking tolerantly.

“Enough, Germaine! You get romantic notions from too much reading. You know nothing of the world—”

“Through playing with it, your highness!”

“—or of marriage—”

“Through trying it, your highness!”

“—or of love—”

“Through—receiving it, my prince.”

“Therefore you are not qualified to judge. But you are my friend, boy—my tried friend. I suppose that all is satisfactorily arranged for tomorrow? I have given no attention to the de-

tails. It is quite enough that Dorminorf is utilizing every resource of the world, the flesh and the devil, and at this moment the flower of the regular army is employed in smashing beer mugs in Bleint to the tune of 'Long live the royal pair!' I suppose her highness, Princess Valma, has arrived and is veiled with that mysterious seclusion which surrounds the bride-to-be."

Krauntz spoke half whimsically, but the youth looking down upon him replied with a certain gravity, as of predetermined intention.

"It is said that the princess will precede your highness, but will not be seen until the time of the royal betrothal and coronation. Even here, in the forest, we have wind of what is taking place at Bleint. 'Tis said that the town is a carnival indeed."

"Ah? Well, such things must be, I suppose." The prince appeared to brood for awhile. "I am more of a soldier than a princeling, Germaine; is it not so?"

"Your highness is both! Sir, it is the soldier and one other who best learn life's greatest lessons—obedience and mastery."

"Ha! Mastery? A soldier?" said Krauntz quickly.

"Surely, your highness, when his blood is flame, his courage dauntless, his will of iron, and his eye an arrow!"

The prince smiled tolerantly.

"So! You deem me all of that, Germaine?"

"Yes, your highness."

"That, then, is the soldier, and who shares his province?" said Krauntz.

"The lover, sir."

"Oho! Well, Sir Scholar, the soldier has sufficed for me so far!"

"Nay, your highness, that is because you have never loved!" said the boy gently.

"Thunder and brimstone! 'Tis well I'm in a mellow mood tonight!" laughed the prince.

"Else it were my last also?" said Germaine significantly.

Prince Krauntz kicked a log and it

fell apart with noisy sparks flying up. He frowned.

"Enough! I wish to hear no more of the marriage tonight! Why harp on it? What matters one State alliance more or less? I was not born to a bed of down, boy, and fate has not fed me on rose leaves! The three furies strewed no balm at my christening, but no doubt bore a good god-mother's part, from our portion of war and bloodshed which followed!" He sighed, and clasped his hands behind his head with a youthful gesture. "'Tis well then that I have had time to lean upon the softer side of life, for now I need not forswear it! Now, what is this?"

The other had suddenly kneeled beside the prince's chair, his dark, intense eyes eagerly scanning his master's face.

"Your highness, my dear master! Oh, I must speak tonight—it is the last time! Forget that I would indeed have been but fool to your grandfather and remember that once you called me Little Brother!" His lips brushed the prince's hand and his eyes were limpid with feeling and truth.

Krauntz smiled a little and folded his arms, falling into the other's mood.

"Well, well, little brother, what is it now? A mare's nest in the forest, or a war in the kennels? An ode perhaps on the approaching nuptials, which Dorminorf will give to the prettiest maiden to deliver with pink roses and blushes?"

"No, no, dear sir! I want to say to you that there is a side of life which you have not tried—that softer side, the part that is not of bone and sinew, but of the heart and soul! Ah, dear sir, I wish to beg you not to forget, not to ignore its promptings! Even I, who have sped before you in thought, knowing your will before it was uttered, a mere carrier-pigeon which, send it where you will, flies back to you—even I have learned this thing: that we may ignore it, turn from it, blind ourselves to its appeal—

ing, but come it will in its own time. And its coming may be pain!"

Krauntz did not speak; his keen eyes were bent upon the boy half humorously.

"And again, your highness, this also have I learned, that freedom is the very breath of your life. Do you not return to this quiet castle in the woods only to breathe the air of freedom and cast aside all subservience to form which is expected of you?"

"Aye, boy, true!" said Krauntz abruptly.

"And, sir, forgive me, but I have learned that your highness can be subservient to but two masters."

"Two masters! And they, Germaine?"

"Duty and love, sir."

"You speak as you have learned—from books, boy!"

"No, from truth, your highness! Sir, do I not know that your hand can be as tender as a woman's, while your heart, so carefully hidden, would turn bitter and hard did you love once and were that love repelled?"

"Come to it, Germaine! I think I commence to see your trail!" Krauntz laughed abruptly. "You are skilful! You try to tell me that the Princess Valma, who does not love me, not having seen me, will hate me when she does see me, eh?"

"Not hate you, your highness, but—forgive me—rumor says the princess is sadly averse to this marriage, and is accepting it as the political obligation which must be faced by you both. The princess is opposed to marriage without love."

"Rumor should beware!" Krauntz broke suddenly upon the boy's breathless words.

"True, sir; but oh, your highness, if the princess is as proud as rumor implies, if she is of such strong spirit and has forced herself to face this marriage, she may—she may—" He stopped.

"Press prejudice to the point of hatred, Germaine? Well, let it be so. Better an acknowledgment of our positions. And now——"

"No, your highness! I pray you, hear me! If the marriage had been of her own seeking, if she were only like others of her rank! But she—the Princess Valma is said to be gifted, also. She is a believer in romance, I should say, and I fear that she—that you will be most unhappy—whereas—" The boy stopped, as one who fears to tread farther in the dark.

"Well, if it be only my unhappiness that exercises you, Germaine, let it be! I have no time to dawdle at the feet of Dame Happiness. She is a capricious jade whose acquaintance I have never sought, therefore she will not seek me. This marriage is a mere contract, boy, a form! Think no more about it. Your days are spent in the pursuit of happiness; mine is a harder chase!" Krauntz flung his arms outward, yawning, and his blue eyes laughed daringly upward to the grave dark ones of the youth who watched him. "His Grace of Fuerstburg is fuming after me at a red-hot pace, and the Princess Valma's suite is speeding to Bleint to wish me joy of tomorrow. Meanwhile, I am comfortably hiding in the woods and wish them joy of tonight! Tomorrow may look to itself, Germaine; I should like to live tonight! It was a taste of your so-called happiness to ride through the pines at dusk! Their breath was wine to my veins, boy! Happiness? A fable of the gods, little brother, unless it be found in the heart of these woods. Jove, were it a few hours earlier I vow I should go hunting. I would be in the saddle now!"

He sprang up, the firelight leaping to his broad shoulders and high white brow.

"I am apter with powder and shot than in knowledge of women, Germaine, and perhaps that is the reason I am not afraid to marry one I have never seen. No doubt she is not different from any other."

"Ah, sir, but she is! I mean, your highness, the Princess Valma is said to be most beautiful."

"Not so, Germaine. I fancy her

exceeding plain, for she refused the ambassador her picture—which a pretty woman never does! But how have you and Rumor grown to be such gossips here in solitude?"

"Rumor is but the wind of speech, your highness. It penetrates everywhere. It says that the princess is independent, liberal of thought and something of a poet."

"A poet! Powers that be—a poet!"

"Yes, your highness, and disproves of marriage without love and— and has never loved, sir."

"A poet, a prude and a princess! The devil!" Krauntz laid his hand kindly upon the boy's shoulder. "Come, come! You call this my last free night, therefore let us spend it well before I grow sleepier."

Suddenly the youth's eyes were alive with eagerness, as of one who makes his last throw, and chances madly.

"Yes, yes, your highness! Let us go out together. We shall have a last chance to do the Other Thing!"

Prince Krauntz laughed now.

"And what may the Other Thing be? By my soul, Germaine, you are more diversion than even a skirmish with Dorminorf!"

"Sir, let us put on our forester dress, in which your highness once hunted. I with a rifle and you with your game-bag shall go out into the night and follow the forest path and do the thing which most we want to do—and not the thing we must!"

"Oho, is that all? Then may heaven send us a monster bear! But let me be well disguised, boy, for remember, I am speeding along the road to Bleint in hot haste to meet the Court and accompanied by his grace, Dorminorf and suite. Your Dame Rumor must not meet Krauntz of Bleint, carousing in the woods on his betrothal eve!"

"Then, your highness, I shall take off that beard. It hides your face and I do not like it!"

"Zounds! What would her highness say did I appear tomorrow without the mark which distinguishes me in my pictures? No, no, not the beard, boy!"

"Yes, yes, dear master! Do you not see that it were all the better to surprise her, when one aspect has been that of the duty in store for her? You will present a different appearance. That scores one point in advance."

Krauntz laughed aloud now.

"Germaine, you have the devil's wit! Off with the beard! But see that 'tis well done. Remember, we must not meet Rumor in our own guise, for if the Princess Valma questions the propriety of a soldier's life such as mine, what opinion would she have of a roving forester?"

II

An hour later the two emerged from the great black shadow of the castle and skirted along the wall of the court, now white in the moonlight. They took a hill path which lay at the edge of the forest stretching for many miles behind the castle and swung along together, the prince metamorphosed now by his smooth face, his forester blouse, cap and leather leggings. His was a strong, bold figure, and as he went he bared his head to the stars, and his trained eye swept the expanse of field and wood, serene beneath the Milky Way, which seemed a white reflection of the path beneath.

Now and then the youth stole an anxious glance at his master's face, but did not speak until Krauntz said:

"What did you mean, Germaine, by the Other Thing?"

They took the hill road slowly now, as the boy spoke:

"It has impressed me in this way, your highness. Every character, in a measure, controls the orbit in which it moves——"

"Ho, philosopher!"

"Hear me, your highness! At some moment, when you were forced to your duty have you not had a quick impulse to do the other thing and observe how far it would disarrange the circumstances dependent upon your action? Suppose you had followed impulse

rather than law, what would have resulted?"

"True! I remember one night; but that was absurd—" began the prince.

"Tell me, I beg, your highness!"

"Well, the ambassador dined with us to discuss a certain treaty about which we disagreed; of course I understood that ultimately I should be forced to sign it. Circumstances were too difficult, but I wished my premise to be understood. A troop of strollers played their violins outside the palace windows in passing—a wild waltz, I think—and I suddenly saw myself making excuses to the ambassador, slipping away to join the vagabonds, strolling with them into the night, faring with them the next day at some far tavern, lying with them in the woods for a noonday nap, earning and eating a crust with them, and laughing up through green branches to congratulate Krauntz of Bleint that he had escaped the treaty, had kept his birthright of truth, and that the world was still rolling on and the sun still shining! But, pest! There I sat, opposite the ambassador, who fancied me lost in thought—and the strollers passed, while I counted the bubbles in my wineglass."

Germaine tossed his cap and caught it, smiling upward to the stars.

"Why did you not do it, your highness? It was the Other Thing!"

"Simpleton! That is what princes may not do. They must follow the law."

"Yet, your highness, we are doing the Other Thing now. You are a rollicking forester and I a lad bearing you company. We are drinking the draught of freedom. We will do that which first appeals to us. Only forget you are a prince, sir, for 'tis hard for others to forget it."

The prince sighed.

"I forget how sweet a breath Mother Earth has until I return to her. See, a light yonder in the forest!"

"Perhaps it is our first opportunity," said the youth; "we shall not

ignore it." They went into the woods path and followed the light that shone from a cottage set among pines, and the boy stepped softly to a window through which came waveringly the orange glow of a fire. A voice was singing, the sound softened by the walls between them. He returned and drew the prince forward.

"This way, your highness!" he said. "Do not forget that tonight belongs to the Other Thing!"

Prince Krauntz peeped between the short white curtains.

"My faith!" he muttered, and drew back, but the boy did not move. Presently the prince looked again. A young woman sat before the fire, her profile turned to the window; a book was in her lap and her hands were clasped upon it. She had stopped singing to speak to an old woman sitting opposite knitting.

The boy whispered: "She stays here with old Nanna, the blind knitter, sir. I came to read to old Nanna a day ago, and—she was here." The prince still did not move; then he drew a breath and whispered scarcely above it:

"She is beautiful!"

The girl raised her arms, smiling, and they heard her say:

"Maman, I am sleepy."

She took the shell pins from her hair and it rolled about her, gleaming yellow in the firelight; the sleeves fell back from her white arms and her throat rose slender and firm from her kerchief. Her head and face were flowerlike in their delicate grace and beauty.

"Shall we go in and ask cider from Nanna?" said the boy. "It will only please her."

The prince drew back with a new timidity.

"No, no! It might—the other might consider it an intrusion."

"Your highness, it is but a forest cabin where others stop, and we are following the Other Thing. Old Nanna knows me only as a forester lad; you shall enter as my friend. Come!"

The prince was drawn to the cabin door, and the boy rapped. There was

an instant's silence, followed by an exclamation; then the old woman opened the door and the boy accosted her with neighborliness.

"I am he who comes to read to you, mother, and I bring a friend. We are going through the forest tonight, and I have told him of your cider, which is the best in these parts, aye, better than any elsewhere. Your servant, lady!"

This, to the girl, who did not rise, but quietly twisted her hair up. Its tendrils lay on her white throat, however, and her face was flushed like the heart of a rose. She raised her eyes and met the strong gaze of the prince who stood against the door, a tall, stalwart figure, and her own was held by it. The old woman started toward the shed door beyond, exclaiming that they should have cider at once, but the girl put her back gently.

"No, maman! I shall draw it!" she said.

"I beg you, permit me to draw it for you, madam!" spoke Prince Krauntz quickly.

"It is not necessary," the girl replied, as she fetched a jug from the dresser, but he followed and took it from her. Her head raised as in displeasure, and she stepped back, then stood, drawn by his eager look, and smiled. "You are bold! The cider is yonder, in the outer shed."

"But I do not know where the shed is," said the prince masterfully.

She went forward and raised the latch, motioning him to go in, but he stepped aside and waited. As though instinct moved her she passed first into the outer shed, the door swinging to after them. The boy who stood now behind old Nanna's chair sent a deep, pensive look after them. At last he said:

"She is not your daughter, mother?"

"There was never daughter, young sir, as dear as she," replied the old woman.

"She does not live here with you always, then?"

"I have not lived here always myself," said the old woman.

"She is very beautiful, mother."

"Aye, sir, even my poor finger-tips tell me that!" The old woman suddenly raised her sightless eyes appealingly. "Young master, your voice speaks of truth. I pray you picture her to me as she looks tonight. Tonight," she added softly.

The boy looked dreamily into the fire.

"I have seen her before. She goes to the great pines where the spring is, alone."

"But tonight?" repeated the old woman.

"Ah, tonight she is different, mother! Tonight she is crowned with a seriousness that sets her apart—that makes her one to be worshiped."

"Aye! But her hair, her hair, young master?"

"Of the sun's weaving, mother."

"And her face, sir?"

"Her face? Her eyes—her lips—Ah, I cannot!" Suddenly he threw his hand to his face. "She is very fair, mother," he said simply.

The old woman's needles clicked.

"Ah, the good child!" she murmured to herself, "always the good child!"

The shed door swung back with a breath of night air and the prince entered, carrying the jug of cider. The young woman advanced with a grave stateliness which seemed her birthright and laid a detaining hand on the arm of old Nanna, who started to rise.

"No, maman, not tonight!" she said. Then she took two mugs from the dresser and placed them on the table before resuming her seat near the fire. Every movement was so full of gentle grace that the prince watched her absorbingly, forgetful that he still held the jug, from which he spilled some of the cider. She bade them help themselves, and her voice was not the least lovely part of her. The boy took his mug, saying:

"Pardon my friend's clumsiness. He is good at soldiering or shooting and is something of a scholar, too, but knows little of serving ladies! Permit me—" He bent his knee and proffered the mug with so adoring an up-

ward look that she smiled a little, but shook her head.

"I do not drink it."

The prince, however, held his high and his eyes were upon her.

"To the beauty of the woods!" he said. But as she did not raise her eyes the youth said quickly:

"A fitting toast! The woods are always beautiful!"

They drank and the prince took a stool before the fire and spoke to the blind knitter, while the boy curled cross-legged at her feet upon a bear-skin.

Presently the prince addressed the girl respectfully.

"Have you dwelt long in the forest?"

"Longer than yourself," she answered.

"Then you do not deem me forest bred?"

She shook her head.

"There is little of the real woodsman about you. More of the soldier, I should say."

"Right! But I am of the forest, too," said the prince.

"I love the forest," she breathed.

"You waste love upon the trees?" He spoke whimsically. "True, I know little of love, but 'tis said some folks crave it."

"Love is never wasted. Like water from a spring it returns to nourish its original source," she made answer impulsively.

"Tell me! Tell me more!" Krauntz leaned forward eagerly, dominatingly as was his wont, with the fire of youthful impetuosity that was a part of his mastery.

Quite unconsciously her eyes responded to the sincerity of his own, perhaps to read his nature, which held truth uppermost, or perhaps, she thought, "He will go his way tonight—why not?" At any rate, she spoke fearlessly, and with a fervor that was consistent with the illumined beauty of her face.

"Love is our one spark of the divine; it is the soul of all our parts. The body does not love without the soul, nor yet the soul without the body."

The prince's face rested on his hand, as he leaned forward listening, eagerly scanning her eyes, but they were on the fire. "Go on—tell me!" he murmured.

"Even as the moon controls the tide, we know not how, love controls our being and holds us in sway. It were far better that we touch the farthest bond of life without love than to accept its semblance, for that teaches only regret without the dignity of loss." The prince drew back and looked at her in wonder.

"You have learned much, much," he said.

She took her book up again, as in rebuke and he looked abashed, boyish; that she was a lady, and fearless, was evident, yet that she was living in the forest with the old blind knitter was manifest.

The youth lay and gazed in the fire, only a glance now and then through his lashes betraying that he was conscious of their presence. The old woman's knitting lay in her lap, her chin on her breast as she slept. A close silence seemed weaving its spell around them, a silence charged with strange currents as oppressive, as strong, as vast as the forest beyond and as unconquerable. Full of mystery and suggestiveness it grew more impossible to break with every second, yet it illumined time with a significance too rare to ignore. It held the drum-beat of the heart, the signal of the senses; it wrapped them in tense solitude, silent yet soundful.

Suddenly she moved as with determination to compel the prince to remove his gaze from her, and her book slipped downward. He stooped to take it up, and as his hand unwittingly touched hers she started to rise, wonder outmeasuring the pride in her face.

"Do not go! Do not!" he murmured. "I will go—if you will"—the youth at Nanna's feet suddenly curled himself upon the skin and lay with his face upon his arm, his dark lashes sweeping downward—"permit him to sleep for a few moments. Then I will go, for tomorrow"—the word arrested her and suddenly her eyes met his with

a strange gleam in them; it was as if fear started to life for the first time, but the earnestness of his face demanded understanding from her—"tomorrow, madam, I have a duty to perform, but tonight I am free. I fear that I am a blunt man, and know little about women. Awhile ago I did not know that you lived, yet in this little space you have shown me what I did not dream of learning—of womanhood and life's possibilities, of which I have only touched the brim, and have not drunk. Now, I beg you, talk to me in this quieter moment as no woman ever has—my mother died when I was born. Tell me, oh, tell me what you will, but talk to me as only a woman—as only you can, that I may carry the memory with me when I go."

Her clear eyes understood him.

"It is strange that I should sit here and talk with one of whose name and rank I am ignorant," she began. "No! I do not wish to know them. It is better so. We are wayfarers for a night in the forest, and shall go our separate paths hereafter."

It was indeed a strange manner in which to be found in a woodsman's cabin, but the prince was in no mood to question it. They talked murmuringly together, as equal to equal, because of that equality of mind which levels all ranks. Her words, lighting upon the flower of his speech like luminous butterflies, made beauty where they touched. He listened as one who was drawn for a brief delicious moment into another sphere where the shackles of habit fall away. He had known little of women whose sympathy could meet his own in quick responsiveness, and whose comprehension was too true to be timorous. Beneath her voice his own confidence unfolded to the heart without fear of misconception.

By and bye the boy uncurled himself and yawned.

"Come, brother, come! Tomorrow will be here soon!" he said.

"Tomorrow!" muttered the prince. It was as a chilling breath, and the girl arose looking startled, her head

held high, her face pale in the candle-light, and stood. It was dismissal. Old Nanna did not awaken, but the boy went to the door and lifted the latch.

"Come!" he said; and the young woman stood in silence as the prince bowed and left her.

Outside the cabin Krauntz of Bleint stood bareheaded gazing beyond him, and as the boy touched his arm he turned, and his eyes were the eyes of a dreamer.

"I love her," he said, as one repeats a creed. "I love her."

"Sir, go back and tell her so!" said the youth.

The prince passed his hand across his brow. "Madness!" he muttered. "Sheer madness! And tonight of all nights! Tomorrow——"

"Tomorrow you will only be the prince, tonight you are the man, and after to—tomorrow——"

"I shall be king," said Krauntz, wheeling about. "You are right, boy! I will not leave her falsely. Whoever she may be, there is none like her. I will tell her!"

The boy sped back to the cabin door and tapped lightly.

"Madam!" he called softly, "madam!"

She came out almost as one who expected a summons, and stood before the prince in the moonlight. Behind them was the darkness of the forest and mystery, above them the eternal truth of the stars. The boy drew away but could not avoid hearing his master, who spoke clearly, as he stood before her, his cap held upward.

"Madam, I ask you to hear me, for, as I told you, I am but a blunt man. I am no stroller, madam, but I am Krauntz of Bleint." At this she grew so white even in the moonlight that he threw his hand out and caught hers which was flung upward as in appeal.

"Wait, madam! It is true that I am the Prince of Bleint, but tonight I am only the man, Krauntz, and, as God hears me, I would this forest were my home if it be yours! Only a miracle wrought by one such as you

could bring to pass that which has befallen me, for in this hour you have taught me what love is, and although tomorrow I shall be bound to another, no power of Church or State can hold me from telling you that to this memory my soul will be faithful!"

He paused, more because arrested by the swift beauty in her uplifted eyes which had held a momentary gleam of fear or apprehension. Now, they scanned his to the soul, but there was soft radiance behind their pride. Then they fell beneath his own.

"Madam, I shall never inquire your name, but shall hold this memory of you as my life's sweetest hour!"

She bowed her head. "I thank your highness for this confidence. It shall be sacred. Now go!"

She added the words as though afraid that her voice might reveal a certain underlying tenderness which throbbled through it, and suddenly the lover in him broke bounds.

"Look at me!" he said masterfully, and their eyes strove together through the white night. "God's grace, you love me!" he muttered. Then for an instant he seized her hands and pressed them to his lips. She broke from him and fled into the cabin, and the door closed. Prince Krauntz turned harshly upon the boy who came to his side.

"Why did you bring me here? Why did you bring me here too late?"

But the boy drew him forward and pointed to where the castle broke black between the stars on the hill-top.

"Your highness, our way lies yonder now."

The prince strode off in the darkness, but the boy stooped and plucked a tuft of grass which her feet had pressed and thrust it in his bosom.

III

THEY walked hard up the hill to the field path, it seeming but the prince's bodily presence which pressed against the night, for his soul was

speeding back on flaming wings to where he had left her.

Suddenly the castle gleamed forth in points of fire. Lights were moving here and there, as they entered the courtyard, and hounds were baying. Voices shouted and horses stamped and neighed at the entrance, while questions flew through the air like the wings of invisible birds.

"Where is his highness? The Duke of Fuerzburg has arrived? Where is the prince?"

A lackey ran forward with a light and stumbled over the prince, whose smooth face and woodsman's dress disguised him.

"Ho, fellow!" cried the lackey. "What are you doing here? Get out of here!"

The prince caught him and flung him over the wall. His was the mood which has won empires.

He strode into the castle where attendants with lights were wondering over the absence of the prince, and one of them accosted him:

"How dare you enter here, fellow! Out with you!" The prince hurled him away and the others fell back terrified and amazed as they recognized who it was.

He went to his own apartments, and the boy closed the doors behind them. The prince strode back and forth, his face burning, his eyes aflame; one moment he was exalted, the next submerged in gloom. Suddenly, with a groan, he flung himself upon a divan, his head dropping in his hands. "What fiend possessed you to lead me there tonight, Germaine? Why should I now, now, learn the curse of loving?"

"And your sweetest hour, your highness?" said the boy.

"True, true," muttered the prince. Then in the silence the tower clock struck twelve.

"Your highness," said Germaine, "it is tomorrow, and his grace awaits you in the antechamber."

Krauntz of Bleint arose and tossed the hair from his brow, and in spite of the woodsman's dress all trace of the forester disappeared.

"Say to His Grace of Fuerstburg that we will see him!" he said.

When the door was opened and the duke announced, the prince stood before the fire, his hands behind his back, his eyes cast down. The duke veiled the surprise which his highness's appearance caused him, and started a little when the prince raised his eyes; they were the eyes of a man who had at last learned his lesson.

"Your highness! I crave your leniency! It was a most unfortunate misunderstanding that your highness should have proceeded thus far unattended! My place is by your highness's side through every moment of this auspicious day! I cannot conceive of such negligence on the part of—of—in fact, were your highness not invariably punctual, I should say that you had started an hour in advance——"

"Enough, enough, my good Dorminorf! You are so accurate a time-piece that I have ceased to rely upon myself in that respect, hence the mistake. It is of no consequence and we will forget it!"

"Ah, your highness! Your magnanimity recalls that of your beloved father—God rest his majesty! But I am desolated that on the eve of your betrothal your highness should have found those upon whom you rely lacking in——" The old man's sharp eyes were perplexedly scanning the prince's forester dress, and his bushy brows drew together.

"To the point, Dorminorf; I am sleepy," said the prince.

"There is a most important subject to which I must entreat your highness's attention! I, alone, was authorized by your highness to direct the court chamberlain in all matters pertaining to the solemnity of the royal nuptials and coronation, and am most disturbed to discover that he presumes to disagree in so momentous a matter as the number of pine cones surmounting the coronets. Your highness, as a baron I should wear six, but as the representative of a duchy I refuse to appear in less than eight!"

"Right, Dorminorf! I rely upon your judgment. Ten cones! Twelve——"

"No, no, your highness! Eight, I beg to correct! Eight——"

"Eight or eighteen, Dorminorf! And now——"

"One moment more, your highness! I was much displeased—the word is not too strong—to discover that her highness, the Princess Valma, refused to appear until tomorrow. I am assured, however, that in spite of her extreme exclusiveness the princess has conceded to all other conditions."

"Ah?"

The prince was surely not attending. He was looking dreamily over the head of the Duke of Fuerstburg, whose brows grew bushy again.

"I beg your highness to attend to this matter for a moment. I hope that which I have to impart may not disturb your highness. It would seem that the Princess Valma is—er—somewhat whimsical. She possesses a most *bourgeois* devotion to nature, which in her childhood she had been unfortunately permitted to indulge. I mean rude nature—the woods—er—and mountains and her gardens and lands. In fact, her highness keeps a solitary mountain cabin in the forest to which she habitually resorts, unattended saving by her foster-mother, a worthy enough old person, that she may the better pursue that which she is pleased to designate as her literary art. Fancy, your highness"—the old man coughed apologetically—"a most extraordinary taste to develop in a princess of so old a house! It appears that the reason for her non-appearance as yet in Bleint is that the princess has stipulated to spend the last few days alone in the forest with this old woman, a blind knitter, I think she is called——"

"Ha!" Like the flashing of light upon a blade the prince's eyes suddenly darted into those of His Grace of Fuerstburg.

"Oh, I beg your highness to believe that it is merely girlish caprice which can be modified and molded into shape by your highness after awhile. Withhold

your judgment as yet, and try to realize that in one so independently situated as the Princess Valma, and so young, there might have been"—his grace coughed again—"other traits more objectionable. This, I am sure, is a mere childish whim, easily overcome in one so young and—er—charming. Her highness may be—er—slightly eccentric, but her beauty is unquestionable!"

Krauntz of Bleint was breathing quickly, and there seemed some rigid constraint set upon him, as his voice escaped:

"She is in the forest, Dorminorf? This forest, you say?"

"Surely, your highness. A mere freak, I assure you! I also desire to consult your highness concerning——"

"I thank you, Dorminorf, but it is late. We will resume tomorrow."

"Then I beg leave to retire, sir."

The old duke bowed. The prince returned the salute, but when the door had closed he did not raise his head, and his voice shook. "Germaine, speak!" he said.

"Sir, it is she," said the boy, pale now to the lips.

"And you knew it?"

"I knew it, my prince!"

The prince threw his head up and his eyes struck upon the boy with stern mastery.

"And she? Did she know me to-night, before I told her my name? Speak!"

"No, your highness! On my faith, no!" said the boy. Krauntz of Bleint looked as though a light had suddenly illumined him.

"God be praised!" he said, as one would who drinks after famine of a life-giving draught. He strode to the window and flung the curtains back, to breathe in the starlit air, and the boy followed him.

"Oh, sir, are you angry?" he whis-

pered. But the prince was murmuring to himself, "Today!—I shall see her today!"

"Your highness, let me explain. I saw her from the tower window, where my telescope is. Then I went to read to old Nanna and there was a book, and a cushion with a coronet on it. I knew that it was she, oh, from many things! Can one fail to see that she is royal? She has no fear! She talked to me—she thought me only—only a forester lad. Ah, sir, I could not help it! You are not angry?"

The prince wheeled about unhearing.

"Germaine! She did not shrink from me when she learned my name? She started, I remember—even now she may be affronted—displeased!"

"No, your highness! It was then that her eyes spoke to you. Sir, she loves you."

The prince threw his arm across the shoulders of the other.

"It is a miracle, this love!" he murmured, and the boy's lips touched his hand.

"You have found happiness, dear master," he said.

Krauntz of Bleint threw himself upon the divan, an arm across his eyes, and mused, and the boy lay down upon the fur before the fire and gazed into the flames. Presently the prince opened his eyes and smiled tolerantly, as one smiles who is the possessor of a secret.

"Little brother, you thought that you could learn of love shut up here in your tower with your books! What do you know of love?"

"Nothing, your highness, through receiving it," said the other. The prince closed his eyes and the tower clock struck one as he slept.

The boy before the fire drew a tuft of grass from his bosom and lay with his lips pressed upon it.

“HOW long did the Van Styles live in London?”
“Long enough to get into New York society.”

THE FOOLISH FOLK

BETWEEN Life's gates of mystery
 Throng solemn men and wise,
 With scales to weigh the things that be,
 To sift, reject and prize;
 Long bowed beneath their wisdom's yoke
 They ponder as is meet;
 But we, we be the foolish folk
 Who know the world is sweet.

Scholar and sage and fearful priest
 They trudge a dismal quest,
 And marvel if the great be least
 Or if the least be best;
 Weighs each the worth of prince or hind
 'Neath cowl and cap and hood;
 But we, we be the foolish kind
 Who know the world is good.

Within the dust of yesterdays
 Their gaunt hands dip and stir;
 They ponder on tomorrow's ways
 And guess, distrust, aver;
 Yesterday's fault, tomorrow's sin
 Their withered lips repeat;
 But we, we be the foolish kin
 Who know today is sweet.

Oh, wise men of the sombre heart,
 We be of little worth,
 Who play our useless games apart
 And take our joy of earth;
 God's mirth when this His world awoke
 Ye have not understood—
 We only heard, we foolish folk
 Who know that life is good.

THEODOSIA GARRISON.



UNDISSIPATED DISSIPATION

“I HAD no idea, until I tried to collect a bill from him lately, that Sharp-
 more had dissipated his patrimony.”
 “Why, what on?”
 “Matrimony. Everything's in his wife's name.”

BROWN

By Arthur Train

“HARRY might have stopped!” thought Brown, as a stalwart young man strode briskly past with a short “Good evening.” “I’ve not had a chance to speak to him for a month.” He hesitated as if doubtful whether or not to follow and overtake the other, then turned in his original direction. His delight in the scene about him was too exquisite to be interrupted even for a talk with his friend. Dusk was just falling. For an instant a purple glow lingered upon the spires of the beautiful gray cathedral, whose chimes were softly echoing above the murmur of the city; then the light slipped upward and upward, until, touching the topmost point, it vanished into the darkening blue.

All about him jingled the sleigh-bells; long lines of equipages carrying gorgeously dressed women moved in continuous streams in each direction; hundreds of lamps began to gleam in the windows and along the Avenue; a kaleidoscopic electric sign, changing momentarily, flashed parti-colored showers of light across the house-tops; big automobiles, full of jolly parties of men and women in enormous fur coats and grotesque visors, buzzed and hissed along; newsboys shrilly called their items; warm, humid breaths of fragrance rolled out from the florists’ shops; smells of confections, of sachet, of gasoline, of soft-coal smoke, together with that of roses and damp fur, hung on the keen air.

The greatest pleasure in Brown’s life, next to his friendship for Harry Rogers, was his continuously fresh wonder at and appreciation for the

complex, brilliant, palpitating life of the great city in which he, the taciturn New Englander, had come to live. The richness of his present experience glowed against the sombre background of his past, touching emotions hitherto dormant and unrecognized. He realized as yet only the mysterious charm, the overwhelming attraction of his new surroundings; and every sense, dwarfed by inheritance, chilled by the east wind, throbbed and tingled in response. So far as Brown knew happiness this was its consummation; and it was all due to Rogers. As Brown wandered along the crowded thoroughfare his mind dwelt fondly upon his friend. He recalled their chance introduction two years before at the Colonial Club in Cambridge, through Harry’s friend Winthrop, and how his heart had instantly gone out to the courteous and responsive stranger. That meeting had been the first shimmer of light through the musty chrysalis of Brown’s existence.

Shortly afterward he had given up his place in the English department at Harvard at the suggestion of one of the faculty and accepted a position at Columbia. The professor had hinted that he was too good a man to wait for the slow promotion incident to a scholastic career at Harvard, and had mentioned New York as offering immeasurably greater opportunities. The advice had appealed to Brown and he had acted upon it.

He remembered how lonely he had been the first few weeks after his arrival. In that hot and sultry September the city had seemed a prison. He had longed for the green elms, the hazy

downs, the earthy dampness of his solitary evening walks. One broiling day he had encountered Rogers on the Elevated railroad. The latter had not recognized him at first, but presently had recalled their first meeting.

Brown in his enthusiasm had spoken familiarly of Winthrop, explaining in detail his own departure from Cambridge and his plans for the future. He was nevertheless rather surprised to receive within a week a note from Mrs. Rogers inviting him to spend a Sunday with them at their country place. What that had meant to him!

At college he had taken high rank and was graduated at the top of his class, but he had made no friends. He would have given ten years of his life for a single companion to throw an arm around his shoulder and call him by his Christian name. He had never been "old man" to anybody—only Mr. Brown. At night when he had heard the clinking of glasses and the bursts of laughter in the adjoining rooms as he sat by his kerosene lamp reading Milton, or Bacon or "The Idiopsychological Theory of Ethics," he would sometimes drop his books, turn out the light and creep into the hall, listening to what he could not share. Then with the tears burning in his eyes he would stumble back to his lonely room and to bed.

When he had achieved the ambition of his college days and by heartbreaking and unremitted drudgery had secured a position upon the faculty, he had found his relations still unchanged. His shell had hardened. From Mr. Brown he had become merely "Old Brown."

And then how easily he had stepped into this other life! The Rogerses had received him with open arms; their house had become the only real home he had ever known; and his affection for his new friends had blossomed for him almost into a romance. Even when Harry was busy or away Brown would drop in on Mrs. Rogers of an evening and read aloud to her from his favorite authors. He tried to guide her reading and sent her books, and

little Jack he loved with all his heart.

The friendship, beginning thus auspiciously, continued for many months. Rogers put him up at the club and introduced him to his friends, so that Brown slipped into a delightful circle of acquaintances, and found his horizon broadening unexpectedly. Life assumed an entirely fresh significance, and although, by reason of a constitutional bluntness of perception, he failed utterly to discriminate between superficial politeness on the part of others and genuine interest, the world in which he was now living seemed to overflow with the milk of human kindness.

Brown had been making afternoon calls. The friendly cup of tea was to him a delightful innovation, and he cultivated it assiduously. He paused in front of a large corner house and hopefully ascended the steps.

"Not at 'ome," intoned the butler in response to his inquiry.

He turned down a side street, but no better success awaited him. He had found no one "at home" that afternoon. Usually he had better luck. But it was getting late and almost time to dress for dinner, and, although Brown usually dined alone, he had become very particular about dressing for his evening meal. His heart was bursting with good nature as he sauntered along in the brisk evening air.

This New York was a great place! There rose before him the vision of his little room in the Appian Way in Cambridge. Had he remained he would be just about going over to "Memorial" for his supper at the ill-assorted and uncongenial "graduates' table" to which he had belonged. Jaggers would have been there, and the Botany man, and that "fresh" chap, who ran the business end of *The Crimson*, and was always chaffing him about society. He smiled as he thought of the quiet corner of the club, and of the little table with its snowy linen by the window, which he had appropriated.

In Cambridge he had passed long months without experiencing anything more stimulating than a Sunday afternoon call on a professor's daughter or an occasional trip into Boston for the theatre, supplemented by a solitary Welsh rabbit at Billy Park's. Other men in the department had belonged to the Tavern Club, in Boston, or the Cambridge Dramatic Society, but he had never been asked to join anything, nor had he possessed the entrée even to the modest society of Cambridge. He was obliged to acknowledge—and it was in a measure gratifying to him to do so, since it threw his success into the higher relief—that judged by present standards his old life had been an absolute failure. No matter how genial he had tried to be, he had elicited little or no response. The days had been one dull round of tramping from his meals to lectures, and from lectures to the library. Although he had had no friends among his classmates, he had at least known their faces, but after graduation he had found himself, as it were, alone among strangers. As time went on he had become desperately unhappy and his work had suffered in consequence.

Then he had come to New York. As if sent by Fate, Rogers had appeared, sought his companionship, made much of him. He began to think that perhaps he had misinterpreted the attitude of his quondam associates—they were such a quiet, prosaic, hard-working lot—so different from these debonair New Yorkers. And was not the cane they had presented to him on his departure a good evidence of their esteem? He swung it proudly. How well he recalled the moment when old Curtis had placed the treasure of gold and mahogany in his hands and, in the presence of his colleagues, had made his little speech, expressing their regret at losing him and wishing him all success. Then the others had clapped and cheered and he had stammered out his thanks. The presentation had been a tre-

mendous surprise. Well, they were a good sort; a little dull, perhaps, but a good sort!

Then, too, he felt himself a better man for his association with Rogers and his friends. It was such a new sensation to be appreciated and made something of that he had grown spiritually broader and taller. It had been very hard in Cambridge, where he had felt himself neglected and passed over, not to be selfish and spiteful. His standards had imperceptibly lowered. He had "looked at mean things in a mean way." Here it was different. With genial, broad-minded associates he had become warm-hearted and liberal. His drooping ideals had reared their heads. He felt new confidence in and respect for himself. Now he looked the world squarely in the eye. His work was improving, and the faculty at Columbia had expressed their appreciation of it. Life had never been so worth living. No one, he resolved, should ever suspect how small and narrow he had been before. He would always be the cheerful, generous, kindly chap for whom everybody seemed to take him. He had become a new man by reason of a little human sympathy.

"How busy people are!" he thought. "I guess I'll have another try at Rogers." He crossed the Avenue, found the house, and rang the bell. The bay-window of the drawing-room was on a level with where he stood, and he caught a glimpse of Mrs. Rogers sitting beside a cozy tea table, and of little Jack playing by the fire. The maid, slipping aside the silk curtain before opening the door, inspected the visitor.

"Mrs. Rogers is not at home."

Brown was paralyzed at such open prevarication.

"I—I beg your pardon. But I think Mrs. Rogers is in."

"Mrs. Rogers is not receiving," curtly replied the maid.

Brown, vanquished but unconvinced, turned down the steps. At the bottom he stopped with a quick breath and glanced back at the house. Then he

gave his trousers leg a cut with his gold-headed cane, and with a courageous whistle started up the Avenue again.

He was a bit puzzled. He was sure he could have done nothing to displease his friends. It was probably just a mistake; they had visitors, perhaps, or the child was not well. He would call up Rogers on the telephone next day and inquire.

He walked to the boarding-house and in the little hall bedroom he called "his rooms" put on the dinner coat of which he was so proud. It had cost sixty dollars at Rogers's tailor. He had never owned anything of the sort before. When he had been invited out to tea in Cambridge, which had been but rarely, he had always worn a "cutaway."

He found Stebbins, the club bore, in the coat-room, invited him to dinner, and insisted on ordering a bottle of fine old claret. Stebbins, in his opinion, was most clever and entertaining.

After the meal his companion hurried away to an engagement, and Brown, lighting a cigar, strolled into the common-room, drew an armchair into the embrasure of a window, and sat there dreaming, at peace with all the world. The kindly faces of Rogers, his wife and little Jack mingled together in a drowsy picture above the fragrant smoke wreaths. The bitterness of his past was all forgotten. The poverty and loneliness of his college days, the torture of his isolation in Cambridge, the regret for youth's lost opportunities faded from his mind, and in their place he felt the warm breath of love and friendship, of kindness and appreciation, and the tiny clasp of the hand of little Jack. "God bless them all!" He closed his eyes. It seemed as though the boy were lying in his arms, the little head pressed against his shoulder. He held him tight and kissed the curly hair; his own head dropped lower; the cigar fell from his hand; behind the curtain Brown fell fast asleep.

Half an hour later into his dream floated the voices of Rogers and Winthrop. A slight draught of air flowed

beneath the curtain. Someone struck a bell and ordered coffee and cigars close by, and the cracking of six or seven matches marked the number of those who had sat down together beside the window. He listened vaguely, too comfortably happy to disclose himself.

"You've got a lot of college men, I hear, in the district attorney's office," remarked one of the group, evidently to Rogers. "How do you like the work down there?"

"Oh, well enough," came the reply. "Trying cases is always interesting, you know. By the way, Win, speaking of college men, exactly who is your friend Brown?"

The dreamer behind the curtain smiled to himself. "Rogers might well ask that," he thought.

"Brown?" returned Winthrop. "You wrote me he was in New York, didn't you? Why, you must have known him in Cambridge. He was the great light of my class—don't you remember?—president of the 'Pudding,' stroked the 'Varsity, and took a commencement part besides. A kind of 'Admirable Crichton.' I'm glad you've seen something of him here."

There was silence for a moment or two.

Obviously, thought Brown, Winthrop was confusing him with someone else.

"No, no," exclaimed Rogers impatiently, "*you* mean Nelson Brown; but he's on a tobacco plantation down in Cuba. The man I speak of is a little chap with a big head and protruding ears. You introduced me to him at the Colonial Club a year ago last spring."

"Oh, well, I may have done so," answered Winthrop. "I don't recall it. I think there was a fellow named Brown who used to hang around there—but he's no friend of mine. Who said he was?"

"Hang it! You did yourself, in your letter to me," came Rogers's retort.

"Nonsense! I was writing about Nelson!"

Rogers smothered an ejaculation

more forcible than elegant, but his annoyance seemed presently to give way to amusement, and he laughed heartily.

"Look here, boys, what do you think of this? Two years ago I run on to Cambridge, and while there happen to meet a chap named Brown. A year later he turns up on the Elevated and greets me like a long-lost brother. I mention the incident in a letter to Win. He replies that Brown is the finest thing that ever came down the pike. *He* refers to *Nelson* Brown. I suppose he means *my* Brown. Thereupon I take this unknown person to my bosom and place my home at his disposal. He promptly squats on the premises, drives my wife nearly frantic, bores all my friends to death, and in a short time makes himself an unmitigated nuisance. Fortunately, he hasn't asked me for money. Now, who the devil is he?"

"Don't know him from Adam!" said Winthrop.

"I know who he is," interjected one of the others. "Took a course of his on the 'Philology of Psychology' or the 'Psychology of Philology' or something. He's just an ass—a surly beggar—a sort of—of—curmudgeon!"

The window curtain trembled slightly, but no one noticed it.

"I can tell you rather a good story about Brown," spoke up a voice that had hitherto been silent. "You know I taught for a time in the English department last year. Brown meant well enough, I guess, but he was an odd creature. His great ambition evidently was to get into society. Every Sunday he would put on his togs and call on all the unfortunate people he knew. Finally everybody showed him the door. He got to be so intolerable that the department fired him, to our intense relief. No one cared what became of him—so long as he only went. But Curtis—you remember old Curtis with the white hair and mustache?—he felt sorry for Brown and thought we ought at least to make a pretense of regret at having him leave. He suggested various things,

but his ideas didn't arouse any sympathy, and we thought that was going to end the matter. Not a bit of it. Curtis went into town, all alone, and, although he is rather hard up himself, bought a gold-headed mahogany cane for forty-five dollars, and next day, when we were all at a department meeting, presented it to Brown, from the crowd, and got off a whole lot of stuff intended to cheer our departing friend. Of course we had to be decent enough to see the thing through, and Brown took it all in and almost wept when he thanked us. A few days afterward Curtis came around and wanted us all to contribute to pay for the cane."

"Well!" responded Rogers. "Even my little boy knew there was something wrong with him the first time they met—children are like dogs, you know, in that way. Jack whispered to his mother while Brown was grimacing at him, 'Mama, is that a gentleman?' Thought Brown was a gas-man or a window-cleaner, you know."

"Poor brute!" commented Winthrop. "Anyhow, Harry, your mistake has probably given him a lot of pleasure. No wonder he seized the opportunity. You can drop him by degrees so that, perhaps, he'll never suspect. Still, if he's as thick as you say he may give you trouble yet! Hello, it's a quarter-past eight already! We shall have to run if we expect to see the first act. Come on, fellows!"

Half hidden behind the curtain in the window, Brown sat staring out into the night.

Hour after hour passed; the servants looked into the deserted room, observed him, apparently asleep, and departed noiselessly. One o'clock came, and Peter, the doorman, crossed over and touched him gently on the shoulder, saying that it was time to close the club. Brown mechanically arose, followed Peter to the coat-room, and then, with eyes still fixed vacantly before him, silently passed out.

"You've left your cane, sir!" Peter called after him.

But Brown paid no heed.

COALS TO NEWCASTLE

I CARRIED to my lady's house last night
 Red roses such as June's warm arbor graced,
 And roses white, oh, marvelously white
 And sweet as summer's own, the sun-embraced
 Of garden plots and gorse and thymy waste!
 Though lately parted from the parent bough,
 I could but mark how faded and misplaced
 The red rose seemed beside her cheeks, and how
 The white but poorly matched the marble of her brow.

Then to my lady's beautiful abode
 I took a string of pearls on which was hung
 A flashing gem wherethrough still ebb'd and flow'd
 The light of Afric suns when Time was young—
 Ere Isis's and Osiris's praise was sung!
 Her grateful lips paid tribute to the prize;
 But I, I lent my heart and soul and tongue
 To sing the row of pearls therein that lies,
 And those dear diamonds, her blue, joy-litten eyes.

Whereto shall I direct my eager feet
 For some delightful treasure that will be
 A new possession, matchless and complete—
 A better gift than rose or rosary?
 Give her heart's love, you say, and constancy!
 I have of love deep and exhaustless wells,
 But this is given her abundantly
 By every breathing thing her beauty spells.
 Indeed, it is Love's House where my fair lady dwells!

EDWARD W. BARNARD.



A BRAVE GIRL

“DO you fear poverty, Miss Swellayme?”
 “We-ell, that depends, Mr. Scrimgeur. If it's the kind of poverty
 that has to wash its own dishes, I do; but if it's the kind of poverty that can't
 afford more than a dozen servants, I could endure it.”

AN EVENING OF TRUTH

By Charles Battell Loomis

SCENE—*Drawing-room of a richly decorated apartment in Central Park West. Some half-dozen people are variously disposed in the room, most of them looking bored. Hostess (MRS. VANE) and her husband stand near the door. Enter Mr. and Mrs. Wood.*

HOSTESS

Oh, dear, it's you, is it? I'm really sorry you've come, because I know you won't mix with my other guests.

MRS. WOOD

Indeed! Well, I came only because I knew it was your last Wednesday, and I thought I might meet someone who would be of use to me. Mr. Wood said he'd much rather have stayed at home and read the paper. Didn't you, dear?

MR. WOOD

I certainly did. If there is anything I hate it is these "evenings" where there's too much music for comfortable talk and too much talk for good music. Still, I'm here.

HOSTESS

You're really in luck tonight, for I expect Count von Walzen. The mere fact of his being here will set me up at least one round on the social ladder, and I don't suppose *you* know another person who could get him by hook or by crook. It is my ambition to become a social leader.

HER HUSBAND

She has the brains for it, but neither the face nor the figure. Lucille is not as good-looking a woman as she was when I married her ten years ago. Do you think she is, Wood?

MR. WOOD

Not by a long shot! Mrs. Wood and I were commenting on it last night. We saw you in the Delormes' box at the Opera.

HOSTESS

Well, it's singular, but I said to John last evening that your wife had only her good looks to recommend her and that I'd rather have brains than a pretty face.

MRS. WOOD

I'm glad you admit my good looks, but do you know I hate you because you *do* seem able to get on in society while we are just where we were when we married. It's all Ed's fault, though. He is hopelessly *bourgeois*.

HOSTESS

Very true, but when it comes to family what have you to boast of, my detestation? Wasn't your mother a second-rate boarding-house keeper?

MRS. WOOD

Yes, she was, and I've always prided myself on the fact that few people

know it nowadays, and surely no one would ever guess it to look at me.

HOSTESS

Still, a pretty face is a gift from heaven, while brains can be cultivated; and brains have been in our family for generations. I'm the first one with any social aspirations.

MRS. WOOD

And I'm perfectly frank in saying that what success you have had is commendable because you are positively homely.

HOSTESS

As my mother was before me, but intellect showed in her face as it does in mine. Oh, I do hope the count will come! I only value him in the estimate that others put upon him. Personally, I understand that he is cad-dish, but he comes of a very old Berlin family and to do him honor is to be honored in return by some of the richest families in New York.

(*The COUNT enters.*)

HOSTESS

Oh, my dear count, my evening is a success.

COUNT

How very American! Success, success, success! It is in the air. Who are those people who just walked away as I came in? She is so pretty and he is so plain that they must be husband and wife.

HOSTESS

Yes, they are, but they are people whom I do not value at all. They are of no use to me; on the contrary, I know that they consider me useful to them and I hate a one-sided affair like that. But you, I cannot tell you how delighted I am to see you be-

cause you will raise me at least three rounds on the social ladder.

COUNT (*good-naturedly*)

Really, it is well worth while to eat your probably ostentatious supper and drink your presumably bad wine if that is the case.

(*Enter MISS GLADYS with HENRY.*)

HOSTESS (*smiling*)

I'm glad you've come, my dear. You are fresh and pretty and you'll be quite a decoration. But who is the awkward fellow with you?

GLADYS

Allow me to present Henry Demarest. I don't like you to refer in that way to him. We are engaged, and I love him better than anybody or anything on earth.

HENRY

Yes, and I love her devotedly. I have no money to speak of, but I am going to marry her and make my way in the world slowly but honestly.

(*Introductions follow and COUNT speaks.*)

COUNT

It will be slowly if it be honestly in this or any other country. The absolutely honest and honorable millionaires can be counted on the fingers of one's right hand. I rather like your looks. You are very plain, but there is a manliness that is American in its best sense. I like the young men of this generation of your countrymen.

HENRY (*politely*)

As a matter of fact, I do not value a foreigner's opinion one way or the other, but I do not think I am plain. Do you, Gladys?

GLADYS

I think you are the very handsomest person I ever saw in my life. Do you think me pretty?

HENRY

If you did not exist there would be no such thing as prettiness in the world.

COUNT

See here, I thought that everybody was speaking the truth this evening. It has certainly sounded so, but that was more like a courtier's speech. Miss Gladys is pretty, but not so pretty as that.

HENRY

Excuse me, count. You have no right to impugn my sincerity. I say that Gladys is the most beautiful woman that ever existed, and also the best.

(They all walk away. Enter MR. and MRS. COWEN. She is overdressed and showy. He is a nonentity.)

HOSTESS

Oh, dear me, here comes that inexpressibly vulgar Mrs. Cowen! I wish she were dead and buried.

MRS. COWEN

Good evening. What did you say?

HOSTESS

I said I wished you were dead and buried. You are the quintessence of vulgarity.

MRS. COWEN

That is interesting to me because I know you mean it, but as for me, I do not consider myself vulgar in the least. I know lots of people who are vulgar, but it has never been suggested to me before that I belong to that class. In fact, I don't believe you know a vul-

gar woman when you see her, unless you happen to be looking in the glass.

COUNT *(upon being introduced)*

Pardon me, but our friend is quite right in regard to you. In Germany I might go for years from drawing-room to drawing-room and I would never meet anyone as vulgar as you, because in Germany riches do not buy position. If your husband had not made millions in copper you'd be circulating among very common people on your East Side. You see I know your town, and it is really so.

MRS. COWEN

Oh, I know that Jimmy is vulgar, but I think I have elevated him since we were married. We use a great deal more silver on the table than we used to.

COUNT

On the contrary, if I'm a judge of faces your husband has sunk. Before you were married he was merely plain. He had no desire to live beyond his station. You have given him social ambition, and as he is not a man of good taste, he has become vulgarized. If you live together twenty years, while you may obtain a cheap polish, you will both really sink.

MRS. COWEN

It's interesting, but I don't believe it.

(The guests are now taking their departure.)

MR. and MRS. WOOD *(to HOSTESS)*

Bored beyond expression. I hate the kind of music you've had tonight—classical and tuneless.

HOSTESS

The music was all right but your ears did not prosper it. Don't come again.

THE SMART SET

MRS. WOOD

Oh, we won't! I don't believe I could drag Mr. Wood out again.

MR. WOOD

You couldn't.
(*They exeunt.*)

COUNT (*to* HOSTESS)

Well, this has been interesting to me. I can see that you are a woman of brains with social ambition, and the means to gratify it, and with a vast deal more taste than is usual among parvenus. I really wish you success. If you come to Berlin my mother will receive you at her home, but merely as interesting curiosities—never on a real equality, you understand?

HOSTESS

But we'll feel on a perfect equality. Every American does. Good-bye. I'm really grateful to you for coming. It has given me prestige.

COUNT

Oh, you needn't thank me. I enjoyed your music, which was worthy of German musicians, and your supper was both well served and tasteful. I did not expect it, and I wonder how you have caught the knack. You Americans must be as imitative as the Japanese. *Auf wiedersehen.*

(*Exit* COUNT.)MRS. COWEN (*coming up with her husband*)

Well, we're off. I've caught on to several tricks that I will imitate, and I've enjoyed myself. My, aren't you homely! But you dress well.

HOSTESS

I can't say as much for you, and you are positively gross. I should think it would worry you. I'm glad you enjoyed yourself, for the presence of that adorable count has made me good-natured. It won't displease me if you come again.

(*Exeunt the COWENS.*)

GLADYS

Good-bye, my dear Mrs. Vane. We've had the most perfectly delightful evening.

HOSTESS (*kissing her*)

I'm glad, my dear. How did you enjoy the music?

GLADYS

Music? I didn't know there had been any. Henry and I have been in a corner all the evening and I've thought only of him.

HENRY

And I of her. Do invite us again. We've had the time of our lives.



A MATHEMATICAL STUNT

ONE added to one equals one,
But of course the one must be won;
Then add a divorce—
That's easy, of course—
And one minus one equals one.

THE PLAY AND THE PUBLIC

By Clyde Fitch

THERE are two principal divisions of all plays—the Good Play and the Bad Play. Then these divisions are divided into two again—the Bad Play that draws, and the Good Play that does not. Then there are countless subdivisions, and divisions “on the side.” Then by itself, in lonely grandeur, stands the Play That Is Too Good For The Public. Don’t you believe it! The Play That Is Too Good For The Public is making the woman’s excuse of “Because.” The true Big Play makes the universal appeal to the plush minds downstairs and the unupholstered hearts in the gallery. The intellectual play can be good in its kind, so can the melodrama; you pay your money and you take your choice—unless you are a deadhead. The professional deadhead has naturally no point of view. He sees only the plays that are not good enough to attract whole audiences by themselves. I have heard of one honest, unprejudiced, fair-minded deadhead, who, after sitting quietly through two very bad acts of a play, himself silent in face of the jeers and sneers of his fellow-audience, finally in the second *entr’acte* went out and bought a ticket so that he might hoot and condemn the piece to his heart’s content. Alas, the poor deadhead! He is the lifeline thrown to a play drowning in a flood of public abuse!—the stomach pump used on a play poisoned by the critics!—the stimulant given a play frozen by the public cold shoulder; and sometimes—but how few times!—the medicine does save a life that’s worth while.

To return to the play; the great play, of course, is the one that appeals to both the mind and the heart. Certain great men have done this. Certain other great men have done half; then their appeal is halved. They satisfy the intellectual on one side and the rest on the other. Shakespeare did it all—Molière almost—certain Germans a great deal. Today, Ibsen, with his wonderful fundamental ideas, pleases the intelligent crowd, bores the romanticists and angers the beauty lover with his lack of all but intellectual beauty. Maeterlinck drugs the senses and delights the mind, and puzzles the popular opinion, and outrages the conventional attitude. Hauptmann and Sudermann satisfy and stimulate the intelligence, and put a cogwheel in the box-office—I am writing, it must be understood, purely of American audiences. All these are, of course, the boldest, best known examples and instances. I am using them for that very reason, as I take it for granted this will not be read—at any rate not read through—by people who have made any serious study of the drama. I imagine myself to be writing for the general typical audience in a successful theatre—people who’ve been to see “Candida” once—because it has been talked about—and like it but don’t agree with the one, or else with the other, in general discussion—and “The Girl From Kay’s” twice.

This is the audience that the manager dearly loves and the erudite critic fights. It is the antithesis of the deadhead gathering. They pay for their tickets and ask in return to be

entertained. It is a composite gathering, difficult to please from all points of view; a gathering anxious to be amused, satisfied to be interested, willing to be *moved*, but absolutely intolerant of being bored. I think it would rather, in the bulk, be entertained by a worthy medium than an unworthy, and it stops to differentiate just about that much. At any rate it's sincere, this audience, which is more than I can say for some of its managers, actors, actresses and authors. It says frankly in effect that it wants to be entertained, interested; if in an artistic way, so much the better—as witness the great triumph always of good plays artistically done. But it will not be bored by “art for art’s sake,” if that art is “buncombe” and really art for business’s sake! This audience is, to use a slang term, “fly.” Moreover, it does not pretend it is the ideal audience. It openly confesses there is the big intellectual play, for some, but not for all of it. It only asks for itself to choose what it wants. In return it gives you an honest medium to work upon, generous in its approval and applause when it gets what it wants.

After all, this audience has a good disposition, and it doesn't really mind being taught something either, so long as you sneak in your lesson. Don't let it know what it is taking till the lesson is down. All this goes a long way—and it is not only in America that this audience rules. In London it is even more pleasure loving; for every one theatre there where “prose drama” is played there are five play-houses where the Tune and the Girl reign in successful revolution. In Paris Antoine's Theatre is small, and Réjane and Jeanne Granier and the theatres of the Boulevard draw the crowds. Even the Français of late years has “hustled” to add to its repertoire amusing satirical pieces; last season giving one comedy which was accused by the critics of being almost a “vaudeville.” It was a case of a miss being as good as a success. So those of us here who love the more serious theatre

must not feel we are any worse off than Paris and London, so far as the temper and disposition of our audience are concerned. In Germany and in Austria it is different. There they have a big, serious-minded audience which goes to the play at seven o'clock, with a rested stomach and a free mind. And in Germany they do keep alive the fine plays, and keep a living repertoire of great ones.

Of course there is no real test, except time, by which to prove the great play. For great plays may have faults. It is their faults that make great men human, and why shouldn't it work so with plays, too? No man can say—true, some do!—this play will last, that will not, for the power of prophecy went out with the days of the sibylline leaves. And the price our journals pay for knowing the news of the moment is the news of the future.

The plays that have lasted are valuable to us as literature and as documents. Technic never has kept a play alive through the centuries. Technic alone is machinery, and we improve all machinery year by year. Outside of their literature, many of Shakespeare's plays are documents of hourly life and manners in the days of Elizabeth, and if you are interested in knowing what life was in town and country before and during the Restoration read Wycherley, Congreve, Beaumont and Fletcher. You will find there the small human document you won't get out of history *per se*. So Sheridan reproduces the social Georgian era, Oscar Wilde the late Victorian, and in France Lavedan, Hervieu and Capus are giving the Paris and France of the twentieth century for future generations to reproduce for themselves if they wish.

I feel myself very strongly the particular value—a value which, rightly or wrongly, I can't help feeling inestimable—in a modern play of reflecting absolutely and truthfully the life and environment about us; every class, every kind, every emotion, every motive, every occupation, every business, every idleness! Never was life so va-

ried, so complex; what a choice, then! Take what strikes you most in the hope it will interest others. Take what suits you most to do—what perhaps you can do best—and then do it better. Be truthful, and then nothing can be too big, nothing should be too small, so long as it is here, and *there!* Apart from the question of literature, apart from the question of art, reflect the real thing with true observation and with sincere feeling for what it is and what it represents, and that is art and literature in a modern play. If you inculcate an idea in your play, so much the better for your play and for you—and for your audience. In fact, there is small hope for your play as a play if you haven't some small idea in it somewhere and somehow, even if it is hidden—it is sometimes better for you if it is hidden, but it must of course be integral. Some ideas are mechanical. Then they are no good. These are the ideas for which the author does all the work, instead of letting the ideas do the work for him. One should write what one sees; but observe under the surface. It is a mistake to look at the reflection of the sky in the water of theatrical convention. Instead look up and into the sky of real life itself.

Of course one can do all this and still have no play at all. There must be, first and last and in the middle, always the Play. That is what the writer who has not his technic misses. The other thing, on the other hand, is so often missed by the technician. The greatest example today of the technician and idea-ist, working together, is Ibsen. But that doesn't mean Ibsen is a great popular dramatist. He is not, because of the other thing he lacks. Oscar Wilde was not flawless in his technic, but each play has its inherent idea, and each reflects absolutely that modern social life it represents. Pinero has proved himself a master of technic, and so has Henry Arthur Jones, and both men love a play with an idea. But no one at the present moment is getting the es-

sence of his environment in thought, word and deed, as Hervieu, Lavedan, Donnay and Capus. Hervieu with the *idea* for the basic principle—the idea serious—Lavedan and Donnay the idea social; Capus, all sorts of ideas together!—any old idea!—so long as it is always life—especially the life superficial, with the undercurrent really kept under. Mind you, a very good play can be built which is false to life, misrepresenting it, maliciously or through ignorance. The motives of the play may be true, and they will give it success, but it will not be literature and it will not be art—poor, bedraggled word! It has begun almost to take on the shoddy hues of the word “lady.” “Lady” we have replaced with “woman,” but our language is not rich enough to give us a word or a phrase even to use instead of much abused “art.”

“Realism” is another sufferer. With two-thirds of the general public “realism” means something ugly, or horrible, or puerile. A beautiful thing may be portrayed realistically as well as a brutal thing. Realism is only *simplicity* and *truth*. The great effort in the theatre is to create an illusion, both as to practical scene and as to story. Realism in the emotions of the play, and in the paraphernalia of the scenes, is the greatest adjunct to both. The one great gift so far of the modern stage is realism, to make up to us for some of the poetry and imagination of which it has robbed us. And yet realism is not opposed to poetry and imagination. Because some people have disliked some form of realism they have rejected the whole. As a matter of fact, it is the audiences themselves, whether they like it or not, who have created the demand for realism. The audience today knows a great deal. I'm not sure it doesn't know too much. It is not easily deceived, not easily convinced. It does not go to the theatre like the child who delightedly starts to play with “let's pretend”—not at all! It keeps out of the game, and watches others “pretend,” never crossing the footlights

itself, but from its own ground criticizes even with its emotions. I suppose it's all right. Every time, every period has its own mark of individuality, and after all, criticize and talk about the theatre as you will, good and bad, wrong and right, art and business, since the world began, these same charms boiled in the caldron! It's all in the day's Play!



FUTILITY

IF I could wake from out this dreamless sleep,
 So calm, so still;
 If I could break the bonds of slumber deep
 And feel the thrill
 Of pulsing life in all my veins again;
 If I could feel
 My heart throb once with all its old sweet pain,
 My soul would reel
 To thine; drunk with the joy of new-born life
 I'd call to thee
 Swift reveille to all the old dear strife
 'Twixt thee and me!
 My lips would press thine own with rapture deep;
 My heart to thine
 Would whisper all the secrets that this sleep
 Hath told to mine.
 Take heed, O ye who breathe, and, breathing, live,
 Say all thou must;
 Of thy heart's fulness generously give,
 Lest thy sad dust
 Wait for the golden words it left unsaid,
 And, lying mute, will rest not, though 'tis dead.

FANNY GREGORY SANGER.



CORRECT

QUIBBLER—Say, Sellers, isn't your sign, "Children's Toys," rather tautological? Who plays with toys but children?

SELLERS—Well, I don't deal in guns, fishing tackle, poker chips, automobiles or any other men's toys.

SEEKERS

By Robert E. MacAlarney

WE talked of them in whispers long before we dared to speak of them aloud. The grown-up folk seemed to be upon intimate terms with them, whereat we marveled. Some day we, too, might be able to refer to them lightly, but that day was remotely set.

Even Henderson, the most apathetic of younger brothers, broached the subject to Margaret and me at luncheon. We were alone as was our wont, and fruit biscuit was to be the next and final course for discussion.

"Who are They?" asked Henderson.

Margaret, who had pondered the hidden veil with me before, looked in my direction appealingly. But, manlike, I made as if I did not see her.

"Who are They?" repeated Henderson, with undignified insistence.

Then Margaret spoke very slowly. "Don't be silly, Henderson," she said. "They are people, of course."

The arrival of Nora, bearing the fruit biscuit, delectably hot, brown and smelly, relieved us for the time of further need for speech. Henderson fell upon his share of the dessert, wolfing it horridly. "Oh, Nora, we were to have had three apiece," he said, with his mouth full. Margaret and I, chewing deliberately to prolong our gustatorial delight, had scarcely tasted our first segment of curranty crisp.

"Two apiece, Master Henderson," corrected Nora. At times nurse is disagreeably decided. Hearing her utter her decree, Margaret and I, mindful of Henderson's predatory instinct when driven to it, pooled our remaining supplies in a safe haven between our plates, where he eyed them with

cannibal yearning. Then, it being suddenly borne in upon him that successful filching from the commissariat was out of the question, he burst into disgustingly apparent tears and outcries; after which crocodile effort he was conveyed through the swinging doors into the butler's pantry, and, I doubt not, was there gorged with the identical delicacies denied him in our vigilant presence.

"The little pig is probably stuffing himself," I said, lingering over the last crumbs. "Nora is making a first-rate cry-baby out of him."

Margaret evinced a commendable spark of loyalty to the absent. "He's very much younger than we are," she said.

"But women always get wiggly when it comes to a man in trouble," I replied. "You're always doing it when we play 'Cid.' When I am beating down Henderson's guard with my mace you scream at me to stop."

Margaret flushed with consciousness that I was speaking truth. "But you have a better shield than Henderson," she urged extenuatingly. "And his arms get tired. And then you are ever so much braver than he is."

I was not an utter victim to her blandishments, however. "My shield is better because I took a whole day to hammer flat the baking-powder cans Nora gave me," I remarked. "I put them on with carpet tacks. Henderson put his on with nails, although I told him they would go through, and scratch his arm in the melly." French battle terms have always had a fascination for me.

"And then he never can play being

a 'well-greaved Greek' very long because his legs hurt. Nora scolds dreadfully about the tears in his stockings." Margaret warmed to her work.

It was my turn to flush. For, do my prettiest, even I had not become armorer sufficiently skilled to pad home-made greaves so as to prevent rent stockings in the hot encounter. "I warned Henderson not to use sardine tins because the edges were always jaggy," I returned weakly. "And bother Nora! A woman never really appreciates deeds of derring-do."

Not long afterward another manifestation of the mystery was vouchsafed to us, this time by the chance remark of an "Older." Father and Mother are "Olders," as are the people who come to see them. Nora is a "Half-Older," because she really belongs to the Play-room; and Cook and Mockridge are "Outside Olders"—thus did we early draw the lines of caste.

We had been indulged in the luxury of taking tea with the family, a guerdon of totally angelic behavior for the day, and unhappily utterly dependent upon Nora's verbal report. The three of us, far set at the remote end of the table, were making inroads upon the damson preserves. It was while I was remonstrating, with whispered threats, against Henderson's prospecting for the bits of lemon peel at the bottom of the jar, that Margaret gave me a convulsive kick under cover of the tablecloth. I left Henderson to his swinish task, and harkened.

One of father's entirely repugnant acquaintances was speaking. I often marveled at the bald-headed, squeaky-voiced people who now and then invaded the house. This one was no exception to the rule. Before, during the apportioning of the meat, which it was our wont to regard with a coldly critical eye, I had noticed this guest engaged in gobbling tactics to which Nora would brutally have called our attention had we been guilty of them. Now he was speaking fussily, and bobbing his head like a sparrow drinking.

"I believe They say so," he said.

My heart leaped, but with dismay. Was it possible that squeaky-voiced, bald-headed gentlemen were upon familiar terms with the mystery?

Father swallowed some coffee and then uttered the mystic word, "Export?" It was an interrogation.

The bald-headed gentleman waggled his head vigorously. "I understand They do it in the Open Market," he said.

Margaret's foot flew against my shin with recurring violence. Even Henderson left off gurgling over his damsons. Here indeed was new detail of the mystery. For They did things in Open Market, wherever that might be. Now that we had a vantage point wherewith to begin our investigation there was hope that much might be accomplished.

"The geography after tea," whispered Margaret, and I reviled myself for not having been more faithful to that branch of Play-room education. Might not "Open Market" have been staring at me from red or green map background for weeks, without my dull senses realizing its import? Were we not De Sotos with the flood of the Mississippi rolling out before our eyes? Henderson, looking at us, snuffled expectantly.

I bethought me that delicate attention would pave the way best. So it was that the depleted jar of preserves was outstretched in my hand when I addressed the other end of the table. "Please, sir," I said, speaking to the bald-headed man, "please, sir, what was it They did? And will you have some damsons?"

"And where is the 'Open Market'?" added Margaret breathlessly, supporting me bravely. "I mean, what map shall we take to look it up?"

An awful, tense silence followed our participation in the table talk. I saw father turn to mother with a startled look, and the bald-headed man put his napkin to his mouth and stared at us through his glasses.

"H'm! I declare! Most extraordinary, I'm sure!" he said. Henderson,

little duffer, clattered his boots against the rungs of his chair and sniveled some miserable sentence about wanting to know who They were, too.

The deluge, as was to be expected, was not long in the coming. But Nora separated Henderson from his perch with a deal more tenderness than was manifest in the way she banished us from the dining-room, after a meaning look from mother. A mad feeling of resentment at the injustice of it all laid hold of me as the hall door swallowed us up. The bald-headed man was still looking dazed and muttering, "I declare! It's most extraordinary!"

"Huh!" I shouted, as Nora's palm propelled me into outer darkness. "I don't believe there is any such place as 'Open Market.' And I don't believe you know who They are."

Thus was our voyage of discovery checked, rudely and humiliatingly. Henderson screamed all the way to the Play-room, but I have reason to believe that was because of the memory of damsons uneaten. His soul was not stricken as were ours. To Margaret's quiet sobs in the dark I could administer no comfort. But I did stealthily get out the geography and scan every map an inch at a time, in the faint hope that after all the bald-headed man might have been telling the truth.

Existence continued family tea-less for a long time after that. Margaret and I spent long afternoons in the garden swing, letting the old cat die with painful deliberation, and ruminating. We were leading changed lives. Even broken reeds, however, with favoring breezes, lift themselves into a warped similitude of their former straightness. Thus it was with Margaret and myself. Henderson meanwhile rioted in a carnival of stomachic disorders, brought on by gorging himself with our desserts, which we had vowed never to touch again until our quest for They should be accomplished.

Then came an afternoon when we felt that something uncanny was in the very air of the house. Mockridge

was in a paroxysm of testiness, and the stable grooms invaded the drawing-rooms carrying big parcels, something which in itself was ominous. Marooned in the Play-room, with our single coign of vantage the balcony, we could but vaguely guess at what was happening below. Nora was practically invisible save at rare intervals, when she came romping into the Play-room, saying unkind things about Cook, which I resolved to lay before that worthy's comprehension as soon as we were released from durance vile. Even Henderson received some cutting proofs of her tongue's razor edge, and was cowed by the utter unexpectedness of it. We supped scantily upon Nora's sewing-table, Henderson omitting to petition for forbidden accompaniments of the meal; in itself worthy of comment. And we retired swiftly and with despatch, pondering the vicissitudes of Play-room existence.

I awakened to see Margaret, a wraith in white, standing by my bed. With the opening of eyes came the sound of entrancing music. Henderson at my side puffed stertorously.

"Quick!" whispered Margaret. "I've been and peeked and I believe They have come downstairs."

I grunted, loath to rise. But then there was the music. And despite me I was half convinced. In the dark fancy conjures easily. "Cross my heart," uttered Margaret, impatient at my playing the sluggard; and in the hazy shadows of the night lamp—which Nora had certainly forgotten to take away with her—I saw her fingers describe upon her bosom the necromancer's sign-manual of truth. In one bound I was beside her. And so keen was my eagerness that I was angered when she suggested tarrying a moment to see that Henderson was tucked in, safe from catching cold.

The hall between the Play-room and the rest of the house was fuzzy and draughty as we traversed it, stealing as craftily as we had in the old days when "Indians" was our game. The hall to the balustrading beyond had been a rolling prairie in those

days. And many a night, after the "Olders" were asleep, had we silently hunted grizzly upon the staircase rocks, and relived the stout-hearted existence of Sitting Bull and Two Strikes, with Henderson doing tearful but enforcedly speechless duty as the paleface victim at many a sanguinary tomahawking. And if Nora prattled about "sniffles"—which we did acquire to a certainty—and potted around the Play-room hunting for imaginary draughts, was there good reason for undeceiving her?

Soon we had left the Play-room far behind, and were scuttling for the turn to the tower where the domain below might be scanned with impunity. What a sight dazzled our eyes as we peered together into the sudden blaze of light! For all the people of our fancy came and went beneath us, stepping to the music of invisible players. I clutched Margaret's arm and sputtered into her ear: "Where are They? Have you picked them out yet?"

As I spoke Henderson's sleepy whine was upon us—that and the clatter of one shoe, which he trailed behind him. "Want Nora to take me to see the grinder-organ man," he whimpered.

I think he would have bellowed had not my hands pinned him, kicking, beneath the ample folds of a convenient rug. When released he was willing to listen to reason. In fact, it was he who proposed that we should approach nearer, by means of the conservatory, from which a narrow iron stairway led to the tower. Thus we could outflank the fairy folk, who, we well knew, became invisible the moment they saw the eyes of mortal gazing upon them.

I led the way, Margaret holding the skirts of my garment after the manner of the thread clue of "The Princess and the Goblins," Henderson scrambling slatternly in our wake. To our joy the door at the bottom was unlocked and the warmth of the conservatory was grateful to our bare legs. It is odd how cool September nights can be

when the "banshee chill," as Nora calls it, is upon one. I scraped against a jaggy palm horribly, but bit my tongue and maintained a stoical silence. All the same I never believed that story about the Spartan youth and the vulture, for I should say a vulture was a bit worse than even a cactus. Then we heard someone talking.

Between the palm leaves, quite plainly evident in the glow from many lanterns, sat a knight and a lady, passing fair. Henderson's eyes bulged. "Is that They?" he squeaked. Margaret's breathing was by gasps. The knight got upon his feet while his sword rattled. Something told me that he had been sitting in the Siege Perilous.

"They say that all women are cruel," he said out loud, looking at the lady, whose silk dress crackled as she got up, too.

"You don't understand," she answered, in a choky sort of way. The knight looked at the Siege Perilous gloomily.

"You see, you don't understand, Archie," the lady kept saying. She was crying, I think, and the knight, melting, would probably have kissed her, had not Henderson scraped *his* shin and let out a howl which was most unmanly of him.

It was a trying moment, for the knight and the lady hastily got far away from each other, and I thought they were going to disappear like the boggarts and the nixies. But Margaret was out in the middle of the conservatory, trembling yet bound to see the thing through. Could I remain behind? Dragging the now vehement Henderson by the wrist, I also tottered out into view, the lady giving a stifled scream at the advent of each apparition. "Please, sir," said Margaret, addressing herself to the knight, "are you They?"

Things were rather confused after that. The rest of the fairy folk somehow came running in, and there was a great deal too much talking over us and no turning into thin air; so much talking, in fact, that I expected every

moment father and Nora might appear, although I knew they must be fast asleep upstairs. Finally father did appear, and somehow he, too, was in fairy dress. But when Nora came she was plain human, and redolent of nothing but severity and the Play-room gaol. It was upon Henderson she fell first.

"My blessed lamb catching his death!" she cried over him. "As for you, Miss Margaret and Master Lester, you'll be the finish of him yet." All of which I considered needlessly brutal, because Henderson had come an unbidden comrade upon our tour of discovery.

In the doorway, as we were hurried away to upstairs banishment, stood a personage in whom I recognized the bald-headed man of the tea table,

although his attire was fearful and wonderful to look upon.

"We've looked for 'Open Market' and it isn't on the map," I shouted. "I don't believe there is such a place." And then I knew sure enough it was the bald-headed man, for he stared vacantly at our retreating forms and muttered: "I declare! It's most extraordinary!"

Even mother did not understand. She came to us after we had been tucked away. "Please be good children until tomorrow, dears," she said. When mothers fail to understand, aspiration is stunted indeed.

So we never knew who They really were, and I have never found a map with "Open Market" in black letters upon green or red. Somehow, I doubt if I ever shall.



IN ABSENCE

I WALK alone, when dimly burning
Late sunset from the ocean slips;
The night-mist spreads her arms, in yearning,
And lays moist kisses on my lips.

Oh, may it comfort you a trifle
To know, if doubt your bosom fret,
That, though these kisses choke and stifle,
They are the only kind I get!

MADELINE BRIDGES.



A NECESSITY

"NO, I can't give anything to the hospital just now. I'm too poor this summer."

"Why did you buy a new automobile, then?"

"Because my old one couldn't make over sixty miles an hour."

LOVE'S WAYS

AN instant only and her eyes
Flashed lightning like the angry skies;

And o'er her forehead, curving down,
Fell dark the shadow of a frown;

Then backward, deep and stormy fair,
She tossed the tempest of her hair;

Then of her lips' full-rose disdain
Made a pink-folded bud again;

Then quicker than all utterance,
All changed: and at a word, a glance,

Her anger rained its tears, then passed,
And she was in my arms at last;

The austere woman, doubly dear,
And lovelier for each falling tear.

But why we quarreled, how it grew,
I cannot tell, I never knew.

Perhaps 'twas love; he who, with tears,
Would show how fair a face appears;

As, after storm, the sky's more blue,
A wildflower's fairer for the dew.

MADISON CAWEIN.



MOTTOES

FOR POSTMEN: True to the letter.

FOR BARBERS: Two heads are better than one.

FOR THE INMATES OF INSANE ASYLUMS: Out of sight, out of mind.



NOT THE ONLY ONE

"YES, I always carry my big money in my vest pocket. Why, where do you carry yours?"

"In my wife's shirtwaist front."

THE PAINTED VEIL

By Edna Kenton

MISS CORNELIA perched uncertainly on a chair and held a poster effect in black-and-red crayons against the wall. Miss Janie hopped earnestly about, peering near-sightedly.

"Over this way, Cornie," she kept saying. "No, that way—not so much—there!"

She handed up a Bodenhausen, tastily reproduced in colors. Miss Cornelia took a fresh balance, and unprotestingly held it four inches to one side of the Mrs. Fiske poster *à la* Becky. By and bye it, too, was hung. Then Miss Cornelia climbed uncertainly down, and the two sisters stood together, surveying their now completed domain.

To an onlooker they would have given a peculiarly distinct impression of belonging to the bird kingdom, though Miss Janie resembled a somewhat frivolous brown sparrow, while her sister, thin and gaunt, looked more like a spare raven, stepping solemnly about a small world. And if they looked like stray birds, their tiny four-room apartment undoubtedly resembled a nest, snug and compact, yet with many a fluttering end, many an incongruous material.

They were in their little sitting-room. An alcove opened off from it, in which an old-fashioned parlor grand piano sat heavily. The alcove was lighted merely from a narrow air-shaft, but the Cravens sisters were very high up, in a crazy old building, which boasted only stairs for ascending purposes, and being therefore so near the heavens a modicum of light filtered through the cheap stained-glass win-

dow that cut through the red bur-lapped wall like a buttonhole slit. This suite, in a previous incarnation, had belonged to an artist, who had hung the walls in crimson burlap and had painted thereon many a weird design. In the dining-room a procession of storks stood at attention about the dado. Here, as in the little sitting-room, a faintly washed design of poppies straggled over the walls in tones of red that slipped dully into the faded background.

Besides the piano there was nothing in the alcove. Above the piano, in a shiny black frame, hung a fine steel engraving, flanked on one side by a water-color study of some rocks at low tide, and on the other by a charcoal drawing of the head of Ajax. In the sitting-room the poppies showed up more splashily against the more faded background. Hung against them was a collection of paintings and drawings and reproductions crazily mixed. There was the Mrs. Fiske poster and the Bodenhausen. A plaster Venus, heavily veneered with burnt umber, stood on a bracket against a plaster bas-relief of William Morris's shaggy head. There was a St. Cecilia happily hobnobbing with a newspaper cartoon of Roosevelt. A magazine cover was pinned up between another steel engraving and a water-color.

All the furniture was very old. A quaint mahogany table stood to one side, with a tea service of beautiful old silver and china. The chairs were of old design, of the days when dresser knobs were of crystal and all things were claw-footed. The only new piece of furniture was a pine table that stood

in a corner, laden with staring white plaster saints, tubes of paints, some brushes. That was Miss Janie's corner. Between the two narrow windows was an old mahogany writing-desk, with drawers that stuck inconveniently. That was Miss Cornelia's corner.

Miss Janie spoke first, with awe and reverence. "We're settled at last, Cornie," she said. "We've got our studio at last, and work to do—even I."

A knock sounded and she fluttered to the door. A young man stepped gaily from the outer to the inner hall. He was a handsome young fellow, twenty-six, perhaps.

"I ran across that brush you'll need, Miss Janie," he said. "No—heavens, no!—take it! You'll find it a good size for the finer work, and somehow those foreigners are uncommonly apt to be nasty about the gilt beads and things. And here's a fern for Miss Cornelia—Miss Cuthbert sent that up, left it with me this morning when she went out. That's all right—she has a great lot of them in her windows—says they grow fine—no trouble at all. What's that—a house-warming Sunday afternoon? That's good. Yes, any songs you want, and any amount of them. I'll speak to Miss Cuthbert about them. She has a glorious new one—no, I just ran up to say good luck. I sha'n't come in."

Miss Janie came back into the sitting-room with shining eyes. "Everybody told us, at Cravensville," she began abruptly, "that we'd find the city cold and abominable. And there was never anyone in the whole town so kind to us, who ever did so much for us as the people we've met here, Mr. and Mrs. Marsden and Ellen Cuthbert and Guy Philbrook."

Miss Cornelia spoke briefly. "We haven't lived in Cravensville, Janie, for the last twenty-two years."

Miss Janie looked up, surprised. Unlike Miss Cornelia, she was not a mystic, and though she was not unfamiliar with the theory that where the spirit is there is the life, any sudden statement of the idea came to her un-faillingly as a shock. Those last twen-

ty-two years of Cravensville life, to Miss Janie, were never so distinct as now when they were forever ended. To Miss Cornelia, now as then, they were actually as if they had never been.

Yet they had been years of realities. From the time of their earliest girlhood Cravensville folk had held the Cravens girls to be in their own minds superior to their surroundings. They had gone away to school, had spent much time in the city; they had strange ambitions and fancies. It was known that Janie painted. It was whispered that Cornelia wrote. This sort of thing the Cravensville folk resented. Never had a prophet risen from their ranks. Never would honor be granted to any such aspiring upstart.

Twenty-two years before—that is to say, when Janie was eighteen and Miss Cornelia twenty-four—their greatest joy and heaviest sorrow had come in sickening succession. Janie had sold her first picture at a sum fabulous in her eyes, a river scene, painted in oils, to a young man from the city. That his judgment of it was wholly sentimental Janie of course had no means of knowing. When, two days later, a city newspaper sent Cornelia a cheque for two poems and one love story, the two sisters felt their cup of joy filling to the brim. One week later Colonel Cravens had a paralytic stroke that left him entirely helpless. Six months later the mother went hopelessly blind.

During that one week of happiness Cornelia and Janie had planned out their happy future. In the fall they would go up to the city and take a studio—delightful word!—in some artists' quarter. Janie would attend art school and paint more pictures—she leaned to miniatures. Cornelia would study quietly in the school of life and write—Cornelia leaned to poems. By and bye fame would come and friends among some great ones. Like Carlyle, Janie and Cornelia were hero-worshippers. In seven days ambition had reached the height of Jonah's fabled gourd. Under swift com-

ing affliction it sank down and withered and seemingly died.

Yet it had great vitality, that wondrous plant. As the score of years slipped by one tiny root kept alive, the root of dreams, that herb of magic and of mystery. It was rooted in Cornelia's heart. In that spare breast there lay a world of tender hopes and small ambitions, some few of which found their blossoming in words to Janie. The rest lay hidden.

As the years went by Miss Janie gathered a small class about her and so kept up her queer little drawing and her oddly sympathetic painting. She had a small voice which she kept in practice—indeed, of the sisters Miss Janie was the more gifted, for whereas Miss Cornelia could only write, Miss Janie could sing and play and paint and compose a little. Yet no more pictures sold at seemingly fabulous sums, and but few stories and poems ever found their way into the newspapers. There was only the tiny family income and the tinier pension to live on. But the Cravens girls made it do, and every year they turned unturnable skirts, and boiled to pure whiteness faded cotton gowns, and made old garments serve a further purpose, all that they might keep up their subscriptions to a musical journal and an art journal and a literary magazine. They lived on the happenings of the outer world. They passed an existence in a tiny province, but never lived two mortals less unprovincial. And always fancy wove a veil of misty fineness that hung bright with painted visions before the perspectiveless vista of the years. Gradually for both of them its pictured dreams became their realities, their hard reality nothing but a dream.

It was two months now since their parents' death. When they turned from the last grave with the earth on the first one still red and staring, they faced without word or planning the carrying out of dreams. A month later, like two birds of eerie passage, they went up to the great city. They fluttered timidly into the office of their

father's lawyer, listened placidly to his words of discouragement, decided on an art school and a boarding-place, and one month later were settling into this downtown nook that came miraculously within their means. Miss Cornelia, through a syndicate, was managing to dispose of a certain number of love tales for minor newspapers. Miss Janie, after a few weeks at the art school, discovered that an art school was too great a luxury for their slender finances. She caught up with modern methods sufficiently at least to realize with her accustomed cheerfulness that she was too far behind to catch up for many moons, and she set about discovering a means to an end. She found it shortly, in a saint factory, where thousands of staring plaster images were molded daily, whose golden halos and cerulean robes were added later. Most of this was done in the factory studio, but a few special models were reserved for a better fate, and were to be delivered semi-weekly at Miss Janie's door. The first installment had just arrived, and the longed for studio was at last, on this morning, an accomplished fact.

By and bye, after the fern was placed, and the new brush tested, the two sisters settled down to work; Miss Janie industriously robing her saints, and Miss Cornelia dressing up a beautifully sentimental love plot, with a hard, set face that belied her happy heart.

At two o'clock they put up work, and Miss Cornelia got their simple luncheon. Over it they planned the refreshments for the house-warming. Even with only tea and cakes and bread and butter there was chance for much discussion. After long argument they decided to leave for another time an experimental mixture of uncolored Japan and Young Hyson and to cling to their old blend of Young Hyson and Oolong. They decided on home-baked macaroons instead of almond cakes bought. They compromised on the bread and butter question by deciding to have both white and brown.

The house-warming passed into his-

tory. The young artist, Philbrook, had been good as his word. He marshaled up his friends, and he and Ellen Cuthbert sang satisfyingly. Miss Cornelia and Miss Janie moved delicately among their guests. All of the callers, with the exception of the lawyer and his wife, were young. Miss Janie fairly blossomed in the eyes of her sister, for she chattered and laughed and made merry, and was unconscious of anything but pure happiness. Miss Cornelia was conscious only of the younger sister and her joy. When the afternoon was over and the guests all gone the sisters sat in the twilight almost silent, save for now and then the breath of a thought. Words are poor things for realizing dreams twenty-two years old.

They were not lonely as the months wore on. A few old family friends were kind to the stray little gentlewomen. They came to know many of the workers and students in the building. Mrs. Marsden, the lawyer's wife, was touched and amused by the quaint little establishment, and her young daughter became possessed of an infatuation that amounted to an obsession.

The sisters felt they had never seen anything so beautiful as Mercedes Marsden. A Sunday afternoon without her was a day without sunshine. They rejoiced at the friendship between her and Ellen Cuthbert, at the good comradeship between her and Philbrook. They were a little coterie to themselves, even in the midst of people. The three young people had taken the two little ladies under a protecting wing. Sometimes they went together; more often Philbrook went with them alone, to odd places for dinners, to private views, to studios and concerts. Before six months were past Miss Cornelia allowed herself to own that after so many years she and Janie were living in the atmosphere they had craved so long; that their Sunday afternoons were always popular; that week by week it became harder to gauge the amount of cakes to buy or prepare for

the next day's onslaught. Miss Cornelia's hickory-nut cakes, and her own blend of two green teas, tried at last, became famous through the building. They had found the great city nothing but cordial to them, nothing but kind. They had found its heart alive and warm. They had come out of Puritan environment straight into the heart of a bohemia, and they hardly knew it by name, or, knowing it, dreamed that they were aliens.

One Sunday morning they were dressing to go with Philbrook to see some pictures in which he was interested, when a note came from Mercedes.

"She wants to bring some friends down with her this afternoon," Miss Janie cried delightedly. "A cousin of hers and his sweetheart. They are musical, and she wants Ellen and Guy here. Couldn't we have all of them stay to tea, after the rest go?"

Miss Cornelia laid aside her half-arranged street gown. "You go alone with Guy," she said, with curt decision. "There won't be enough cake. I'll bake some more."

She helped the protesting Janie hurriedly to dress. Something—perhaps it was the exquisite spring day, perhaps the scant mention of young lovers, perhaps the growing joy of six months culminated—something made Miss Cornelia's soul swell and grow big within her. She wanted to be alone. She heard gladly Philbrook's knock. She followed Janie to the hall. She gave one brimming glance at them as they went downstairs. Then she went back and shut the door and bolted herself in.

While she was beating up the sponge cake she laughed and cried in foolish abandon to her solitary joy. She was seeing the fulfilling of dreams. She rejoiced with an almost mad rejoicing. She exulted grimly, but not for herself. She was six years Janie's senior, and she owned candidly to her forty-six years. She had had her chances, two lovers—three, if one might modestly count one too shy to propose. She had cared for none of them. Her

ideals had been higher than any of them could ever meet. But through them she had tasted a little of the joys and some of the mysteries of life, and she suffered much for Janie and her blighted girlhood. Janie had never had a lover. During those days of care and Cravensville Miss Cornelia had not rebelled against fate. But in these latter days she found herself fiercely fighting—for Janie—that Janie, at scant forty, might have the boons denied her at eighteen. She knew that she herself looked every day of her forty-six years. Her hair was iron-gray. Her eyebrows met in a masculine line over two utterly feminine eyes. Heavy lines scored her face. Her figure was spare and lean. But Janie was different. She was slightly plumper. She had fair hair which curled naturally and lay in ringlets all about her face. Her eyebrows were delicate and did not meet disfiguringly above her eyes. Her hands were pretty and plump, instead of being made up of bone and knuckle. She had what Miss Cornelia held to be a beautiful mouth, and what Miss Cornelia considered a ready wit and charm that accounted *in toto* for the standing of their Sunday afternoons.

While the cake was baking in the oven, and later while she was frosting it, she thrilled with the delight of things unowned. Yet deep in her heart she owned boldly to it. What she wanted most of all to come to pass for Janie was a lover. Her fancy was running riot. She was ashamed of herself, and she exulted with tearful smiles at one and the same time. There had been other things than the mild extravagance of cake-baking that had kept Miss Cornelia in that morning. There was something beautifully maternal in her longings for Janie, in her plans and her desires.

Miss Janie came in alone, solemnly. Her voice was hushed. Her eyes were full of light. Miss Cornelia glanced shrinkingly at her. She felt the change that had come over her sister. She asked a few questions, general ones, and Miss Janie answered them inconse-

quently. It developed after a bit that she and Philbrook had gone nowhere in particular, had not seen the paintings. "We just walked—and talked," said Miss Janie vaguely. Miss Cornelia pressed no questions nor needed answers. She held herself in that hour to be seer and prophetess.

Guy Philbrook came up early that afternoon. He brought some flowers, spring blossoms that bore no relation to hothouse flowers. For an hour he was the only guest. Miss Janie was playing when he came, and she did not get up from the piano. By and bye he went over to her, and began to sing to her accompaniment. Without having the slightest gift for it, Miss Janie had a mild mania for accompanying singers, and she worked assiduously over songs for him. Philbrook was like Miss Janie, versatile. He sang as he painted, remarkably well, that is. Miss Cornelia sat and watched them both shyly, flutteringly.

"Oh, sing it over," she begged as the last strains died. Her voice sounded through the faint tinkle on the yellow-keyed piano of the closing measures of "*Der Nussbaum*."

"Shall we?" Miss Janie asked as her tiny fingers fled industriously through the last two runs. The young man nodded, smiling, and Miss Janie began again her conscientious pursuit of the melody. He took up the first line: "*Es grünet ein Nussbaum vor dem Haus*," following as he could Miss Janie's flighty flights over the keyboard.

When it was finished again he spoke: "This is where Schumann and Schubert have been sounding all week."

Miss Janie smiled without confusion. It was Miss Cornelia who blushed vicariously. She had noted the practicing of "*Der Nussbaum*" and "*Sylvia*" and "*Auf dem Wasser zu singen*."

Outwardly the afternoon was like many another one. People of various sorts came and went. Only Miss Cornelia noticed the peculiar light that still shone in Miss Janie's eyes when she glanced at Philbrook, or the serene answering confidence in the young man's face as he looked back at her.

No one noticed Miss Cornelia, her upliftedness, as she moved among her guests.

When all the callers had departed there were left after all only Mercedes and Philbrook to help eat Miss Cornelia's sponge cake. She spread the tea cloth on the mahogany table in the sitting-room. Miss Janie set it. In the kitchen Philbrook cut up nuts and fruits for a salad and was dressing it. When he had mixed it he brought it to Mercedes as she sat cutting cake and piling it up on a silver salver.

"It's your turn now," he said simply.

Mercedes blushed slightly as she took the bowl and the plate of blanched lettuce. She began to arrange the leaves in the quaint old dish. A few moments later Philbrook came in from the kitchen, followed close by the sisters. He stared, fascinated, for a moment.

"What a picture!" he muttered. "Great heavens, what lines and color!"

Mercedes was sitting in a square bay-window, in an old-fashioned, straight-built chair. Her slender body was slightly bent over her work. Her dark hair fell in lovely confusion over her forehead. She was wearing a white wool gown. In her lap she held the Chinese bowl with its nest of green. Behind her a Chinese lily sent up its straight green leaves and white blossoms. Through the windows came the last rays of the sinking sun, setting to-night with a strange green light.

Mercedes looked up suddenly, flushing through her clear skin. Miss Janie ran over to her and kissed her lovingly. "I never knew anything so lovely could just happen!" she cried. "Nor did Guy. I thought things had to be posed."

Miss Cornelia's pale eyes glowed with eagerness. She reached out an avid hand for further instruction. "What made it, Guy?" she asked.

Philbrook laughed a little. "All of it," he said, and would say no more.

Mercedes got up quickly and pushed back her chair. She brought the salad over to the table. The Jap-

anesque pose and setting dissolved as if by magic. Both she and Miss Cornelia were very quiet through the meal. Miss Janie and Guy talked happily and intimately.

Miss Cornelia made them all sit still while she cleared away the tea things. She was so happy that night that she wanted the snatches of solitude the little kitchen afforded. As she washed the silver she heard stray bits of talk from the sitting-room. Guy at last was analyzing the reasons for the beauty of the little picture of an hour back. Miss Cornelia caught eagerly at drifting phrases, bits of artists' "shop." It came to her as it had never come before, the difference between this life of beauty and friendships and love and that fettered one at Cravensville. Next month, too, Janie was to enter on another term at the art school. She had the right people about her at last. She had life and love at last. What more could life hold than this for the elder sister? Over the teaspoons she dreamed dreams unspeakable, things not to be thought of deliberately, to be thought of only when they came drifting like kaleidoscopic bits of a beautiful future. And only for Janie.

When she came back into the sitting-room Philbrook was singing again. Mercedes was playing for him. Miss Janie was watching them, sitting in the same straight-backed chair where Mercedes had sat while the sun poured its green light through the windows. She gestured silently to Miss Cornelia, and bent toward her eagerly.

"Tonight I want to tell you something about this morning," she said after the manner of one to whom the mere telling that there was something to tell was a relief unspeakable. Her eyes were shining softly. Miss Cornelia caught her breath.

"About you—and Guy?" she asked, with shameless daring.

Miss Janie nodded happily.

Miss Cornelia sat back and closed her pale eyes. Only now did she let herself realize what her dreams through

all these months had been. She looked at her sister again. Miss Janie's eyes were fastened on Philbrook, lighted with "the light that never was," Miss Cornelia quoted softly to herself. It was impossible to mistake that shining light. She sank back again. Her heart was filled with joy. All her dreams had become truth. That painted veil of fancy was not illusion, but Truth itself. What might be, was. There was nothing in life to be dreamed of that did not exist, somewhere, for the dreamer.

She became suddenly conscious that Guy was singing "Der Nussbaum" again; that Mercedes was playing it—beautifully:

*Es grünet ein Nussbaum vor dem Haus,
Duftig,
Luftig
Breitet er blätt'rig die Nester aus.*

*Viel liebliche Blüten stehen dran;
Linde
Winde
Kommen, sie herzlich zu umfahn.*

Miss Cornelia opened her eyes and looked at them, the singer and the player. Mercedes's eyes were on the keys; Philbrook was looking steadily down upon her bent head.

*Sie flüstern von einem Mägdlein, das
Dächte
Nächte,
Tagelang, wusste, ach! selber nicht was.*

*Sie flüstern—wer mag verstehen so gar
Leise,
Weise?
Flüstern vom Bräut'gam und nächsten Jahr.*

Miss Cornelia was looking at them very quietly, the singer and the player. In her mind, however, was another picture—a picture of the late afternoon, of the white-gowned girl, the Japanesque arrangement, the greens in accessories and atmosphere. Suddenly she looked across the room at her sister, sitting in that straight-backed chair. She looked back at Mercedes. Another picture rose in her mind, unheeded before, but distinct to a hair; a picture of the earlier afternoon, when at the piano another figure sat, playing conscientiously the same haunting melody. She saw it distinctly, the quaint little woman in

pure profile, with fair hair tossed about a face faded and old. She saw with pitiless eyes the little snub nose, the peering, near-sighted eyes, the streak of crude blue light that fell through the stained glass across the finely wrinkled little mouth, the tiny fingers laboriously hurrying through the runs:

*Das Mägdlein horchet, es rauscht im Baum,
Selmend,
Wähnend
Sinkt es lächelnd im Schlaf und Traum.*

The silence in the dim room lasted for many minutes. Finally Mercedes moved uncertainly. Her eyes went first to Miss Cornelia and then hurried on to Miss Janie and rested there.

"I must—go," she said half fearfully. "I—can go alone—I know."

Miss Cornelia caught her breath. She, too, turned toward her sister, to see in Miss Janie's eyes the light that had shone in them all day long. Guy made a quick step after the girl, and then held himself back. But his eyes, too, were shining.

Miss Janie fluttered to her feet. "Yes," she said quickly, "you must go. Guy, get her wraps." She put the long coat about the girl and nodded to Philbrook. The young man went out into the little hall and came back with his outdoor things on.

Mercedes swerved away slightly. "It isn't necessary," she breathed. "Not further than the car." She kissed both sisters hurriedly and slipped into the outer hall.

Miss Cornelia was once again sitting in her chair when her sister turned from the door.

"He told me this morning," Miss Janie cried happily. "He wanted to ask me about her father, what Mr. Marsden might demand in a man. He feels he can really think of marriage now that he has got on the staff of the *Star Monthly*. That song told her—he meant it should—I know the dear things are talking now. Guy said if he won her he wants to bring her here for the first few years. To think of having them so near us every day!"

Miss Cornelia straightened her thin shoulders and looked at her sister—she dreaded that first look, despite Janie's happy voice. A swift question leaped to her lips, a question that had no seeming bearing.

"Do you never miss anything, Janie?" she asked harshly. "Never? Are you always happy?"

Miss Janie looked with wondering eyes. "I was born happy, you know," she said. Suddenly she flushed, as if her cheek were brushed by the wing of a flaming thought. She bent over

her sister. "We've always had each other, Cornie," she said. "I've always had you."

Miss Cornelia sat for many minutes while Miss Janie moved quietly about, straightening the room for the night. It had been, after all, only one day out of many years. The habits of a lifetime may not be easily broken. She knew where Janie's happy thoughts were. By slow degrees her own went timidly out in the night, following the two young lovers, dreaming their dreams with them, for her joy and Janie's.



SATAN FINDS MISCHIEF STILL

THE Devil was idle. He sat on the hillside meditatively chewing the end of his tail. The Angel was reading to him from Records of the Paleozoic Age, and the Devil was very bored. This happened long ago.

Finally, as he sat eying the Angel with malicious intensity, his face lighted up with an evil inspiration. Without interrupting the reading—for he was a perfect gentleman—he took a chunk of misery from his pocket and began kneading it between his fingers. Afflictions were always growing luxuriously in the Devil's vicinity, and he did not have to reach far for the other ingredients that he wanted. A pinch of desolation was mixed into the misery and then a handful of torment, a trifle too much tribulation and generous measures each of distress, sorrow, grief, wretchedness, woe, unhappiness, heartache, anguish, suffering, calamity and evil.

When it was all mixed smoothly and to his liking he laid it into a bed of rue near at hand and ostentatiously went on listening to the Angel's reading. In a very little while, seeing out of the corner of his eye that the time was ripe, he plucked the Angel by the wing.

"Look!" said the Devil.

And there in the bed of rue was growing the most rare white lily that the hillside had ever known, a great lotus-blooming chalice, pure, radiant, fragrant and filled with a handful of golden seeds.

"Is it not beautiful?" said the Devil.

"Most beautiful," replied the Angel, going closer, and there was a long silence of adoration.

"Suppose we take the seeds of it and plant them on the earth?" suggested Lucifer charitably.

"I will go myself!" said the Angel, with the light of a kindly purpose in his eyes. He swept the golden seeds into his hand and started away down the hillside. The Devil put the end of his tail into his mouth again and bit it in his savage joy. He did not dare to laugh until the Angel was out of hearing. But at the edge of the hillside the Angel turned.

"We ought to give it a name?" he said benevolently.

"Call it Love," replied the Devil, and then he lay back in the bed of rue screaming with silent laughter. No more Records of the Paleozoic Age for him!

BEATRIX DEMAREST LLOYD.

VANISHED

By Charles Hanson Towne

SOMETHING that died
Came back to me in bleak Novembertide,
And at my casement wept and sobbed and sighed.

Something that fled
To the still haven of the sleeping dead
Came back to me ere the great dawn grew red,

And in the rain
That fell like silver at my window-pane,
Called me and called, and cried—alas!—in vain!

For I who slept
All tranquilly while darkness round me crept,
And wakened only once while the storm swept

About my door,
Thought, "Surely 'tis the rain and nothing more."
And then I dreamed—dreams never dreamed before!

Lo! to my eyes
Came one more beautiful than calm June skies,
Whose face was wonderful and wonder-wise.

"In the sad rain,"
She said, "I called to you, alas! in vain,
And nevermore can I come back again.

"In nights to be
When the wild storm shall beat incessantly
Outside your door in anguish loud and free,

"You shall but hear
The rain's low voice come to your listening ear,
And not hear my voice, clarion and clear.

"And you shall know
Only despair and anguish, harkening so—
You who slept on when I called loud and low.

"And you shall long
To hush from out your heart the rain's deep song,
Yearning to hear a whisper from my tongue.

THE SMART SET

"And you shall weep
When you have wakened from your restless sleep;
Weep that no tone of mine calls from the deep!

"You shall grow weary
Hearing the rain's voice in the midnight dreary,
Yearning for my voice, calm and soft and eerie!

"You shall awake,
You who would not waken for my sake,
And wish, when the rain sings, your heart might break!"

So now I rise
When a great storm has darkened all the skies,
And listen to the wild wind's melodies.

And oh, I yearn
For that now gone, which will no more return,
For that lost voice whose message I might learn.

And sadly, I,
Ere the white light of morn illumines the sky,
Listen in vain for it and softly cry—

"Give back to me
The vanished message, gone, oh, utterly;
Give back, give back, dead Opportunity!"



HALF BAKED

CHOLLY—What do you—er—really think of me?

DOLLY—Oh, I presume you will be a pretty good sort of chap when you are finished.



PERHAPS SO

SHE—Brazen thing! It is whispered that she poisoned her rich old husband for his money!

HE—Oh, well, perhaps she thought his means justified his end.

THE HONEYMOON

By Gouverneur Morris

THE coffee and liqueurs had been long in coming. We got to talking about service and servants. Manners stood up for his beloved English; Cambell said that there was nothing so good as a good negro; and Prince Laniaski, who had been for many years in the Far East—or rather the Far West, for such it has become—proclaimed the Chinaman.

"The Chinaman," said Laniaski, "neither makes himself understood nor understands what is said to him; but he does the work of three, and there is no noise in the house."

"That's a blessing," I said.

"It is a blessing," said the prince. "For example: I like your club; the restaurant is delicious; we are delightfully at home on this broad veranda; the moon is on the bay; it is even June; we are breathing the most delicious perfumes in the world—salt water, roses and the smoke of Havana tobacco; there are no mosquitos; no one of us is sleepy; we shall talk and smile and dissipate until midnight; we shall not be disturbed; we are the motive in a poem. And yet there is one drawback: the boy who brought the coffee had unclean teeth and squeaking shoes. This would not be possible in China. Your Chinaman is noiseless. He is also a prestidigitateur. If he has provided for one only and seven arrive for dinner, there will be enough food for seven; yet the bill of the butcher will show no correspondent swelling. Except for one hour in the afternoon, when he smokes opium and recuperates himself, he will be noiselessly busy all day. When there is nothing to do in the house he

will pick flowers in the garden. When there is nothing to do in the garden he will wash himself and freshen his teeth. He will not steal the value of a pin or tolerate dust. Hercules needed a whole river to clean out the Augean stables; a Chinaman would have required nothing but a little more time and a toothbrush."

"I have had some experience with them myself," said Cambell, "and I admit the truth of all you say. Nevertheless, I hold that your Chinaman fails in the highest attribute of being a perfect servant. My negro appropriates my bright-colored neckties and sherry; but he leaves my valuables strictly alone. He is indolent, when no one is looking, and very boastful; but he loves me and he loved my father before me; and, yes, I think he would die for me."

"I object to a Chinaman," said Manners, "because he looks like a China-woman."

"I object to him," said Cambell, "because he has no affection. He is merely a very clever yellow mechanism, quite without heart."

"And what do you think?" said the prince to me.

"I think," I said, "that Cambell is right about the affection. But I am open to conviction."

"I knew a Chinese servant," said the prince, "who chose a rather singular way of showing affection to a white master. It was more than affection—it was an acute love. It is, of course, an isolated case, and does not prove the Chinese to be affectionate as a race, but I will tell it to you, and you shall judge if they may not have

hearts that beat exactly as ours do. What I am going to tell you did not happen in the Orient, but in California.

"There was a man out there named Vigors—a bachelor of unblemished morality—who dabbled in the arts, and lived in a charming little one-story cottage on the hills overlooking the town of Monterey and its beautiful blue bay. The house was a little treasure, covered with vines into which you could sink your arm to the shoulder—roses, red passion-vines, pipe-vines, shell-vines, wistaria, columbine, clematis, and I forget what all. Inside the house was full of amusing embroidery and pictures and porcelains, and also wines and cigars. Vigors was not rich, but he had enough. His house was as clean as the works of a brand-new watch. His little dinners were served noiselessly and rapidly; his garden was extraordinary, even in a country of extraordinary gardens—so trig, so well kept, so weedless, so flowery. And except for a man to look after the horses, this was all the work of one Chinese servant named Fong.

"When breakfast or luncheon or dinner was ready, instead of the stale 'Dinner is served' or '*Monsieur est servi*' of Occidental civilization, there was the graceful, noiseless entrance of the slim Fong, a deep bow, and the cheerful, appetizing announcement, 'Alight, mistah!'

"If Vigors had been a woman Fong would have said, 'Alight, mistah,' just the same.

"I loved to put up at Vigors's. He was very good company, and affectionate—the most delightful of all the qualities of American men. If he liked you he said so, and was always doing thoughtful things to prove it. One night I said to him, 'Now, Jimmie, that servant of yours is too wonderful a subject to remain longer out of our conversation. Where did you get him?'

"Vigors laughed. 'I got him through another Chinaman,' he said; 'you must always get them that way. But I don't know any more about him than you do. We never converse. He can't

understand what I say and I can't understand what he says. When I engaged him I tried talk, but it wouldn't do. I asked him how long he had been in this country, and he said, "Evlybody diffunt"—which was a facer. But he's well enough; I have no complaints. I've had him two years and I hope he will stay by me till I die.'

"When you tire of him, Jimmie,' I said, 'I will engage him. For a Chinaman his face is very taking, and his manner of handling a dish would make my return to Warsaw famous.'

"I will leave him to you in my will,' said Vigors, and we laughed and discussed other things.

"The next morning I was smoking my cigar in the garden when Fong came out of the house with a large bowl and began to pick lettuce into it. I walked over to him and said, 'Fong, don't you ever want to go home to China?' And he answered, 'Alight, mistah.' Then I said, 'Do you like your master?' And he said, 'Alight, mistah.' Then I said, 'Why don't you like your master?' And again he said, 'Alight, mistah.'

"So I did not wonder that Vigors had long ago given up any attempts at conversation.

"This happened long ago. I was visiting Vigors prior to making my initial trip to the Orient, and, as you may imagine, I was very—as you would say—very keen on all matters pertaining thereto. So I used to ask Vigors a great many questions about the characteristics of Fong.

"Tell me this,' I said once. 'Does the creature ever show that he has the slightest affection for you?'

"Never,' said Vigors; 'as far as that goes he might be a chair.'

"Now, Jimmie,' I said, 'I believe that you are wrong. I will tell you why. This afternoon, when you were in town and Fong was in the garden and I was solitary and had nothing to do, I went into the kitchen to brew me a dish of tea. Now, as I passed Fong's room the door was open, and what do you think I saw on his bureau?'

"‘I know,’ said Vigors; ‘you saw my photograph. I gave it to him by request, and he burns incense in front of it. It’s a custom they have; you see, theoretically I am his father and his mother and must be kept in good humor. He would burn the picture instead of the incense without any compunction if it happened to be the custom.’

"‘Anyway,’ I said, ‘you are very kind to him and he must like you for it.’

"‘Oh, no,’ said Vigors; ‘they consider us foreign devils, barbarians, boors, what you will. They hate us.’

"‘The next day I was to sail from San Francisco. Vigors drove me to the station in Monterey, and we took leave of each other with real affection.

"‘Mind what I have advised you,’ I said, ‘and do not let the middle of life find you single. When I come back I shall hope to see you married to some charming young woman. And remember that if she does not like Fong I will take him off your hands.’

"‘And as for you,’ said Vigors, ‘when you come back you are to come to me at any hour of the day or night. My door is never locked.’

"‘Then we shook hands and promised to correspond, which promise we mutually broke, and that was the last I saw of Vigors for three years.’

The prince paused while the waiter with the squeaking shoes served us. When the man had gone he went on.

"‘Never take a man at his word,’ said the prince, ‘for it will lead you into awkwardness.’

"‘The next time I found myself in San Francisco I said to myself, ‘I will just run down to Monterey and give that man Vigors a surprise.’ He was a man that I remembered with true affection. I really wanted to see him again. So I boarded the Monterey express, and, after reading at various journals and magazines, fell asleep. When I awakened we were running through the lovely orchard country of the Santa Clara valley.

"‘Two seats in front of mine sat a bridegroom with his bride. Their heads were very close together, and it

must have been their whispering that had wakened me. I heard the bridegroom say, ‘Yes, dear, those are almonds, but my orchard is roses and lilies and—cherries . . . Do you think anyone is looking?’

"‘In fact, save for those two and myself the car was empty. And I withdrew into the smoking-car.

"‘In time we reached Monterey, and I had a conveyance to take me and my portmanteau up the hill to Vigors’s house. It was a charming, cool drive under the stars. There was the admixture of perfumes which is so delicious here tonight, the salt water, the roses and the tobacco, for I was smoking a Havana of the best. I thought a good deal about the bridegroom and the little bride in the train, for, though I never married, I have often wished to; and I wished that something really good like that might some day come to me.

"‘Well, there were lights in Vigors’s house, and so I paid the driver and lugged my portmanteau through the garden—God, how good the roses and honeysuckles smelled!—set it on the doorstep and rang the bell. While I stood waiting I heard a clock in the distant town striking ten.

"‘Vigors himself opened the door. His hair was mussed, and until he saw who it was that had disturbed him his face was very angry. Then he looked confused and embarrassed; and then, all of a sudden, he caught me by the shoulders and began to roar with laughter. Then he leaned against one of the veranda posts and gasped until he was calm.

"‘What is the matter with you?’ I said.

"‘Lani,’ he said solemnly, ‘I’m damn glad to see you, old man, but I was married at noon and we’ve just finished dinner.’”

"‘Good Lord!’ broke in Manners, “what *did* you do?”

"‘I permitted myself an Anglo-Saxon oath,’ said the prince, “and began to halloo frantically for my driver to come back. But he had already passed beyond recall. Furthermore, he was an old man and deaf.

"Vigors took me by the arm and drew me into the house, although I protested violently. He kept saying, 'It's all right, Lani—it's all right.'"

"The little bride was all blushes and confusion and prettiness. Vigors explained the visitation as well as he could for his embarrassed laughter—the little bride's hair was also mussed—and demanded that I should at least spend the night.

"But I said, 'No, my dear people, I will do nothing of the kind. But I will do this: I will sit with you for five minutes and drink a glass of wine, and then, if you will extend hospitality to my portmanteau I will walk back to Monterey. But I shall never forgive myself for this intrusion, and you will never forgive me.'

"I'll have Blois hitch up something and drive you down,' said Vigors.

"You will not,' I said. 'I will walk. I tell you I *will* walk.'

"So we settled it that way. And the little bride, to show how good a housewife she meant to be, fetched wine and glasses. While she was fetching them, I said to Vigors:

"So you have taken my advice, after all?"

"Yes,' he said, 'and between you and me, Lani, she's the dearest, sweetest—'

"Yes—yes,' I said; 'as we Poles say, not a maiden but gold—pure gold.'

"Then she came back, and they both began to talk at once. And we all laughed a great deal. She was very pretty, very chic, very young—just the right age for a bride; but too young to have the care of a household. I made some remark to that effect. And Vigors said:

"You forget Fong!"

"And the little bride—she was like a child, so rosy and candid—clapped her little hands and said:

"Indeed, yes. I am to be taken care of by the famous Fong.'

"And will Fong manage for two?" I said. 'Is everything to devolve on that trusty one's shoulders?"

"Everything,' said Vigors; 'for the present, anyway.'

"Later,' I said, 'you will have to have something with a cap and long streamers and an apron.'

"But the little bride looked so embarrassed that I was very sorry I had said anything of the kind. And I changed the subject hastily.

"What did Fong say when you told him that you were to be married?" I asked.

"Vigors laughed. 'Fong said, 'Alight, mistah.'"

"After that I rose to go, but the little bride said, 'You must not go yet; you must sit and talk with Jimmie. But I'm very tired. You see, it's been a long, hard day, and I think I'll go up. Good night.'

"She was perfectly self-possessed, and held out her hand to me. I bowed very low and kissed it.

"May God have you in His care,' I said. 'Good night.'

"Vigors went with her as far as the stair. When he came back he had a wonderful look, all tenderness and gladness, and I said, 'I am going in a minute, old fellow—have patience.'

"But he did not hear me, I think, for he said:

"Isn't she wonderful!' and tears of real happiness stood in his eyes. So I fell in with his humor, and for a quarter of an hour we praised the little bride as I think few women have ever been praised before. Then I said that I would go, and took up my hat and coat. Vigors went into the hall with me. While he was helping me on with my coat neither of us spoke, and it seemed to me that I heard a curious noise emanating from some room on the upper hall.

"What is that noise?' I said. 'It sounds like snoring and yet it doesn't.'

"Vigors listened a moment and laughed. 'Why,' he said, 'it must be a faucet that isn't working properly—sometimes they make a noise like that when you first turn them on, before the water begins to run. Too much air in the pipe, I suppose.'

"Yes,' I said, 'that must be it. Good night, old man. Forgive me for coming. Good luck, and God bless you!'

"And as I walked down the long road under the stars and the moon, smelling the salt and the roses, I thought a great deal about Vigors and the little bride. I pictured her as I had last seen her, so rosy and trustful, bidding us good night, and slipping away. I pictured her, too, after she had reached their room, kneeling perhaps by the side of the bed, and sending up a little prayer to the good Father who had given her happiness. And I pictured Vigors striding up and down in his study, all fear and nervousness and beatitude, looking at the clock, laying his ear against it to see if it was really going; clinching and unclenching his hand, and praising God. And I pictured him trembling and knocking upon the door of that room wherein there awaited him the roses and the lilies. But, gentlemen, I did not picture to myself that he would enter that room and find his bride lying across the bed with her throat cut from ear to ear.

"Yes, gentlemen—dead in her innocence. And the noise that we had heard was the noise of blood conflicting with air in her severed windpipe.

"They found Fong in the cellar lying on his face in a pool of blood. He had disemboweled himself. And they found also that he was a woman.

"It is not a pretty story," concluded the prince, "but I think it goes to prove that in one instance a Chinese servant loved a white master."

"But after all," said Manners, "she was a woman—so nothing is proved."

"Yes," said Cambell, "but do you mean to say that Vigors hadn't known all along? Was she good-looking?"

"For a Chinawoman—yes," said the prince. "But Vigors had not known. He was a man who might have gone to Arthur's Round Table and disputed a right to the siege perilous with the virgin knight, Galahad."

"What became of him?" I asked.

"He went mad," said the prince.



SILENCE

THE poets, with a cloud of words, eclipse
The moon of passion. . . . Nay!
For me, love, let me breathe against your lips
The things one need not say.

ANNA ALICE CHAPIN.



KEPT BUSY

"DOES she read much?"

"Oh, yes! She reads the six best selling books, and you know how often they change."



HER VIEW

"I SEE that there is a movement on foot to forbid the marriage of all those in any way weak-minded or degenerate."

"Oh, John, isn't it lucky we're married?"

THE PLAINT OF THE RICH

NOTHING to do, oh, people!
 Nothing to do but spend.
 Someone to amuse us,
 Something to enthuse us—
 Where is the next kind friend?

We've run all the gamut of functions—
 Conventional, splendid and freak;
 We'll blow half a million
 On just a cotillion,
 If only it's truly unique.

We've golfed and we've tooled and we've poloed;
 We've searched high and low with our play;
 On air-ships, like horses
 And yachts and divorces
 And autos, we'll soon be blasé.

The country is older than Noah,
 The city, egad, is the same.
 In bridge there's a yawn
 For each thousand that's gone—
 Do give us another new game.

We've used up all scenes and sensations
 E'er dreamed by Pinero or Fitch.
 By our money bereft
 There is naught for us left—
 So pity the poor, poor rich!

EDWIN L. SABIN.



HER DEFINITION

"FRANCES," said the teacher, "what is a hyphen?"
 "A hyphen is something you use when you break your word to stick it together again," replied Frances.



MEN dislike old maids. They are the statistics against man's irresistibility.

LES CONVENANCES

Par Hugues Le Roux

VOYONS, Barker, votre impression toute franche?

— Excellente, monsieur le comte...

Cela fut dit avec un aplomb anglais, une pesanteur de poings prêts à la boxe. M. de Loyaumont eut un geste noble, qui signifiait: "La chance sait ce qu'elle me doit." Cependant sa nervosité continua de se trahir par le supplice qu'il imposait au cordon de son monocle, roulé entre ses doigts jusqu'à la convulsion.

C'était la veille du Grand-Prix et, malgré la confiance de son entraîneur, le sportsman se sentait mal à son aise! Sûrement Jaguar était une bête admirable. Il avait montré à Chantilly ce que l'on pouvait attendre de sa foulée. Si un pareil cheval ne prenait pas la tête, dès le départ, pour la garder jusqu'au poteau d'arrivée, il valait mieux déposer ses couleurs et vendre son écurie. Mais le champ de courses a d'étranges surprises! Et M. de Loyaumont, embarqué dans l'inquiétude, fronça ses sourcils aristocratiques au bruit d'un coup léger frappé à la porte du fumoir.

— Qu'est-ce que c'est, Firmin?

— Madame fait dire à monsieur le comte que M. Bérard a été fort indisposé cette nuit.

Les nobles sourcils de M. de Loyaumont se rejoignirent tout à fait. Il déclara:

— Il faut que j'aille voir le cheval. Je monterai ensuite chez M. Bérard, avant déjeuner...

Il ne prononça pas un mot de plus, par mépris de la valetaille, mais vraiment il était tout à fait agacé. Quand il avait épousé la nièce de ce M. Bé-

rard, c'était sous la condition de ne point fréquenter l'oncle. Et voilà que ce négociant, avec l'aplomb des millionnaires, se permettait d'être malade chez celui que—fort impertinemment—il appelait son "gendre"!

Il ne fallait rien moins que l'excellente condition où se trouvait Jaguar pour rendre à M. de Loyaumont toute sa belle humeur. La croupe du cheval était peut-être bien un peu fuyante, les flancs trop larges malgré l'entraînement. Mais les muscles faisaient saillie sous un filet de veines dont on suivait la capricieuse géographie à travers une peau satinée et douce à la main.

Au moment où M. de Loyaumont entra dans le box faiblement éclairé, Jaguar tourna le tête vers la porte. Comme pour mordre, il avança sa tête enfermée dans une muselière, puis il piétina la paille de ses pieds de devant. M. de Loyaumont lui passa la main sur le cou, avec un plaisir presque voluptueux. Et, de fait, l'homme et la bête se ressemblaient. La race apparaissait chez l'un comme chez l'autre, dans la maigreur énergique, dans l'aisance des mouvements, dans la finesse des attaches.

M. de Loyaumont passa le reste de la matinée à causer avec les gens d'écurie, à se faire conter les potins des jockeys et les bruits qui couraient sur les adversaires de Jaguar.

Il avait si bien oublié l'indisposition de l'oncle Bérard qu'il ne put retenir un haut-le-corps, lorsque au seuil de l'hôtel, Firmin lui dit sans préparation:

— Monsieur le comte, c'est une apoplexie!

Le malade était étendu dans un grand lit à baldaquin. Ses cheveux

d'argent, rasés sur une tête toute ronde, et aussi l'éclat des draps, faisaient paraître la figure encore plus violacée. On avait largement ouvert le col de la chemise, et l'échancrure du linge montrait un cou tassé. Le ventre proéminent soulevait les draps comme un édredon; les mains étaient posées dessus, inertes. L'agonie du négociant semblait dépaycée dans ce lit à colonnes. Aux murs, des portraits de gentilshommes, poudrés, en habit rouge, en uniforme, la main sur des gardes d'épée, regardaient mourir ce gros homme dans leurs meubles, avec une nuance de dégoût. Une moue toute pareille abaissait la bouche de M. de Loyaumont, quand, du bout des dents, il demanda au médecin:

— Une indigestion, n'est-ce pas?

Mais le docteur secoua la tête. Il avait essayé tous les révulsifs, les sinapismes, les sangsues, l'émétique. Rien n'y avait fait. M. Bérard semblait condamné. C'était un cas foudroyant.

M. de Loyaumont saisit le médecin par le bras.

— Impossible! mon cheval court après-demain... Et je ne veux pas le retirer.

L'homme de l'art eut un geste d'impuissance. Mais M. de Loyaumont n'était pas d'humeur à accepter une solution si contraire à ses volontés.

Il répliqua d'un ton décidé:

— Vous me répondez de votre malade, docteur.

Et il descendit chez la comtesse.

Il la trouva en conférence avec sa couturière. Mais il était si énervé qu'il ne prit pas garde à la présence d'une étrangère, et, croisant les bras:

— Vous savez la farce que votre oncle nous joue?

Madame de Loyaumont était aussi agacée que son mari. Elle répondit avec aigreur:

— Cela ne m'amuse pas plus que vous. Ma robe est prête, et l'on vient de m'envoyer mon chapeau, une merveille.

Ces préoccupations égoïstes achevèrent d'irriter M. de Loyaumont. Il fit:

— C'est toute l'humeur que ce contre-temps vous donne?

— Vous voulez que je crie?

— Je veux que vous vous indigniez!... Un pareil manque de tact!... Choisir ma maison... Et cette semaine... cette date!...

M. de Loyaumont ne se contenait plus; il grommela entre ses dents:

— ... Ces manants!

Et il sortit en claquant les portes.

Le négociant mourut, le soir, à six heures, sans avoir retrouvé sa connaissance. Mais les héritiers étaient sans inquiétude sur ses dispositions testamentaires. Le bonhomme avait recueilli sa nièce presque au berceau. Il avait fait élever l'orpheline dans un couvent, avec les filles de la noblesse. Toute sa vie, il avait travaillé pour lui amasser une dot, puis des rentes. Il n'avait presque pas souffert de son ingratitude. Cela lui suffisait d'être la marche basse, la fondation du monumental escalier par où "son Hélène" était montée à la fortune. Et maintenant il avait dans la mort, malgré la surprise de sa fin, le calme de ceux qui, n'ayant point vécu pour eux-mêmes, quittent la vie sans regret.

En rentrant pour le dîner, M. de Loyaumont trouva Barker dans l'antichambre. Tout de suite, il se troubla:

— Il est arrivé un malheur à Jaguar?

— Non, monsieur le comte.

— Alors?

— C'est l'oncle de madame qui est décédé.

Malgré l'empire qu'il avait sur lui-même, M. de Loyaumont s'engouffra comme un coup de vent dans l'appartement de sa femme.

— Eh bien! dit-il, ça y est.

Madame de Loyaumont passa sur ses yeux un petit chiffon de dentelle.

— Il ne faut pas, dit-elle, que cela empêche votre cheval de courir. Mon oncle ne l'aurait pas permis.

Loyaumont haussa les épaules:

— Je me moque de sa permission et je ne lui ai jamais demandé des leçons de convenance!

Il avait sur le bout de la langue:

"A vous non plus!..." Mais il se

contint, par habitude d'éducation. Madame de Loyaumont ne se tint pas pour battue.

— Voyons, fit-elle, mon oncle n'aurait pas dans le monde... Aucun de nos amis ne le connaissait... Est-ce qu'il ne suffirait pas que, vous et moi, nous nous abstenions de paraître, dimanche, sur le champ de courses?

Loyaumont ricana:

— Et que mon jockey mette un crêpe à sa casaque, n'est-ce pas? un brassard de collégien.

Et comme la jeune femme objectait qu'elle avait vu le petit de Téraumont courir le cerf peu après la mort de sa mère, le sportsman s'emporta tout à fait:

— Chasser est très deuil... et ce sont des convenances que vous devriez connaître! Ma parole d'honneur!... je vous croyais plus éduqué!

Elle dit d'un ton froissé:

— Alors, que décidez-vous?

Sans répondre, M. de Loyaumont pressa la sonnette électrique. Il dit au maître d'hôtel:

— Envoyez-moi le cuisinier. Qu'il monte comme il est.

Le maître-queux parut dans ses vêtements blancs, et M. de Loyaumont demanda:

— Casimir, êtes-vous organisé pour

me conserver une très grosse pièce dans la glace?

— Une grosse pièce, monsieur le comte?

— Oui, un sanglier... un ours?...

Le cuisinier hésita.

— La semaine dernière, dit-il, j'ai perdu une belle alose. Il est vrai que la chaleur a diminué; on pourrait essayer, monsieur le comte.

Un léger abaissement de menton indiqua que le maître était satisfait de cette bonne volonté. Il dit avec aisance:

— Voici de quoi il s'agit: l'oncle de madame la comtesse vient de mourir subitement. Si la nouvelle était connue avant dimanche soir, mon écurie ne pourrait pas courir. Installez une glacière dans l'ancienne remise et tâchez de conserver le corps. C'est entendu, n'est-ce pas? Et, maintenant, encore un mot. Vous le savez, je suis libéral. Avant comme après, je compte sur vous pour arrêter la langue de mes gens.

Un sourire de complicité passa sur les lèvres du chef. Il répondit avec la déférence nécessaire:

— Monsieur le comte peut être tranquille...

Tout le monde, dans la maison, a mis de l'argent sur le cheval.



LOST JOYS

THROUGH utter dark and chartless space
The day-god burns up to his place;
And drops not from the stalk a rose,
But in its place another blows.

Life's gift, or great or small, once given,
Is as the flower, the star of heaven;
Aye, Nature is not more than men—
The lost joys all come back again.

JOHN VANCE CHENBY.

THE FIRST REAL LADY

IT is remarkable how much we may know about remote personages.

Eve lived a long time ago. And yet today it is possible to speak of her characteristics with authority.

We know, for example, that Eve was fickle. The fact that she was not surrounded by a lot of admirers was not her fault. Men were just as scarce at the first summer resort as they are today. But with the one she had Eve did the best she could. In spite of the Darwinian theory, she made a monkey of him.

And the only trouble with Adam was that, when he fell, he didn't land on both feet.

We know also that Eve was unselfish. When she came across the first nice red apple she didn't hide behind a fig tree and eat it all herself and then come out and say, "Here, old man, is the core." But with rare generosity she gave it to Adam first. She believed when there was any new fruit around in trying it on a dog. "Take it, Adam," she said, "and if it gives you appendicitis, grip, pains in the back, a hacking cough, and makes a crank, a liar and a profligate out of you, I won't go back on you. I'll eat the other half, and stand by you to the bitter end, even if the price of necessities is doubled and I have to run you in debt to keep myself respectable."

That was one of the great things about this kind, first lady of the garden. She didn't let her old side-partner meet the consequences alone, but she stood in with him to the bitter end. "As long as you're booked to go down in the express elevator to the basement floor, I'll go with you," she said, "and break your fall."

And Eve did it. She not only broke his fall, but he also, patient and willing sufferer that he is, has been broke ever since.

Looking back on Eve, as we can through the still lapse of dressmakers' bills and the long vista of spring openings that stretch the other way through the golden past, we know now that she hated and despised clothes.

"Give me," said Eve, "a little of the long green; say an acre or so; that is all I ask to cover me from the biting draughts of the opera and the sharp, keen air of the ballroom. Give me a few old feathers, gathered by some chesty Nimrod, in remote quarters of the earth, that don't cost more than one hundred dollars an ounce, and I can worry along. All I ask is a few thousand dollars' worth of little things for my head and feet and hands and siren form, to last me for the next two weeks until I make out a list of the real necessities, and I can manage somehow."



NO CRITERION

PRESSMAN—Quills, the editor, is quite sick; he's in a very critical state.

SCRIBBLER—That's nothing; he's always too blamed critical.

A PHILOSOPHER OF THE TUB

By Channing Pollock

A LARGE, portable bathtub stood in the office of the American consulate at Santa Anna, and during the course of a lull in the firing the head and shoulders of the American consul emerged from the top of it.

"I hope you will pardon me for parading the appurtenances of my toilet before you," that official remarked to another head which had just been thrust above an overturned sofa. "After you had adopted the divan this happened to be the only bullet-proof article in the front part of the house."

"The position certainly is a most unconventional one," rejoined a pair of particularly pretty lips properly situated in the other head.

"Unconventional, perhaps," quoth the consul, "but not unprecedented. You will remember that a Greek gentleman renowned for his wisdom made a point of receiving in precisely this way."

"That may have been all right when Greek met Greek," the lips retaliated. "Its propriety in our day and circle is open to argument."

"And argument," returned the occupant of the bathtub, "is one of the things for which we have no time at present." There was a patter of bullets against the mud wall of the building, and both heads were withdrawn from view.

In the street outside a detachment of barefooted Federal troops was adjusting with a detachment of insurgents a difference of opinion as to the personnel of the Government of Salvador. The debate, which was of

an impromptu nature, had begun nearly an hour before, and honors were about even. Neither contestant had made any attempt to advance and neither had evidenced the intention of retreating. Warfare in Central America is a peculiar thing, and amusing when watched from a sufficient distance. The consul and his guest did not feel that their position was entirely favorable to the development of a sense of humor.

"Of course," observed the diplomat in the next intermission, "these greasers couldn't have selected any other place for their uprising. They had to interrupt the last proposal of marriage I shall have the chance to make to you."

"It wasn't exactly an interruption," the lady corrected. "I had just said 'no' for the second time."

"Well, I might have been able to ask you a third time before you took the train for Acajutla. Three is my lucky number. I was born on the fifteenth of March."

"I don't see what that has to do with it."

"March is the third month in the year and fifteen is five times three. If I had put the matter to you on the way to the railroad station you don't know what your answer might have been."

"I can come near guessing. Why, you've known me only three weeks!"

"I told you three was my lucky number."

"And I wouldn't engage myself to any man with whom I had been acquainted for less than a month."

"Poor philosophy that, Mrs. Stew-

art. My opinion of matrimony is that in at least one essential it resembles a cold bath: the more quickly you take the plunge the less likely you are to suffer unpleasant results."

"Your opinion on the subject of matrimony doesn't concern me in the slightest," said Mrs. Stewart. "Any assurance you may have to give regarding the resistance that cotton wadding offers to bullets will be listened to with great interest."

"You may expect a practical test within a few minutes," replied the consul. "They are beginning again."

They were. The Federal troops made a sharp sally and actually succeeded in pushing their line to within twenty yards of the door of the consulate. "We're safer now," commented the consul, when the report of the rifles and the shuffling of feet convinced him that this had occurred. "The mob will be aiming right at us. Thank God for Latin marksmanship!"

A steel-covered projectile bored through the door and made a hole in a tin eagle hanging on the wall.

"That's the emblem of the United States!" ejaculated the gentleman in the bathtub. "It's worth over five dollars! However, if they've got to choose between an emblem and an emissary when they insult the Government, they're welcome to take the emblem!"

"It is an insult, isn't it, Mr. Love?" queried the lady.

"It is; and when we get out of here I'm going to make that patent-leather president sweat for it!"

"Up to this time," observed Mrs. Stewart, "we have done most of the sweating. I suppose you couldn't open one of those back windows?"

"You suppose correctly."

"I'd be very grateful. It's scarcely a step, and there isn't a breath of air stirring."

"There are many other things stirring, Mrs. Stewart, including bullets, but I'm afraid I can't consent to be among them. The market price of consuls is too high."

"If you were half a man," Mrs. Stewart remarked indignantly, "you would throw back that blind."

"If you were half a woman," retaliated Mr. Love, "you wouldn't ask it."

"If I wanted to marry anybody I shouldn't decline to do whatever she desired of me."

"If I didn't want to marry you I should take pleasure in granting your request. It is the improbability of doing the latter and still living to do the former that deters me. Low bridge! There they go!"

Once more the little band of Government soldiers advanced, and still the rebels held out doggedly. According to the plan of their candidate, they were to create a diversion somewhere in the far end of the town while certain companies of Federal troops, whose allegiance had been purchased, gained possession of the barracks. Then the expedition was to retire to this place of vantage, whence the business of subjugating the unpurchasable portion of the army might be carried on expeditiously. The forward movement took the regulars past the consulate, and there began to be longer rests in the score that the bullets had been drumming on the wall.

"The British consul laughed at me when I bought this tub," mused Mr. Love. "I don't believe in too frequent bathing, myself, but there are climates in which a good, thick tub is a great blessing."

The young widow was silent.

"Still vexed with me?" inquired the consul amiably. "Well, you know, it's your own fault if I am only half a man. I've suggested the addition of a better half often enough."

"Mr. Love," quoth his companion, "when I think what it has cost me to say 'good-bye' to a poltroon who refuses to endanger himself one minute for my sake, I am furious with myself. But for you I should be comfortably seated in a railway train, knowing that every revolution of the car wheels brought me nearer to Acajutla, the steamer and the States."

"Not much nearer, Mrs. Stewart.

You can't conceive the slowness of Salvadorian railway trains. When it comes to revolutions, the army has their wheels simply lashed to the mast."

What might have been Mrs. Stewart's reply to this untimely persiflage is only conjecturable. At that instant a messenger mounted on a donkey rode up beside the commander of the insurgents and shouted: "No use! The soldiers have gone back to Rivas! Run!"

And run they did, as fast as their legs would carry them, the victors following at as much less than the same rate of speed as they thought would appear convincing.

The American consul rose stiffly from his tub and helped Mrs. Stewart to her feet.

"It's all right," he said. "By George, what a plucky little woman you are! You don't look a bit flustered. Still, you'd better have a pick-me-up before you go."

"Thank you," answered the lady, with dignity, "but I think I'll go before I have a 'pick-me-up.' I'm afraid I've missed the train, as it is."

"That would be unfortunate," said Mr. Love. "If you will permit me, I'll carry your bag. I don't expect José back for twenty-four hours, at least."

Despite Mr. Love's expression of sympathy, he made no haste to get to the station, and when that place was reached at last the train had been gone

all of ten minutes. "It was due to leave at three," explained the agent. "It is now nearly five."

"And the steamer—the *San Blas*?"

"Ah, it is too sad! The *San Blas* sails immediately upon the arrival of the train."

"The next boat for 'Frisco isn't due for a fortnight," added the consul, an expansive triumph crowding into his voice. "At the end of that time you will have known me quite a month, Mrs. Stewart, and I shall do myself the honor of proposing to you for the third time. I believe I mentioned that three is my lucky number."

Mrs. Stewart turned toward him a face in which contempt and something approaching amusement were struggling for the mastery. There was only contempt in her tone, however, as she said: "Mr. Love, do you suppose for one instant that I would marry a man who declined to open a window for me simply because he thought that he might get hurt in doing so?"

Mr. Love laughed. "Oh," said he, "that wasn't the reason! I refused to open the window because, if I had, you would have seen how easily we could have got out the back way into a quiet street that led directly to where we now are. One can't count on Salvadorian railway trains leaving promptly, and I wanted very much that you should not catch this particular train."

Then Mrs. Stewart laughed, too.



A POSSIBILITY

"MY love for you can never fail,"

He pleaded, in dismay.

She said: "I do not doubt your tale;

I know your love will never fail,

But then, your business may!"

WALLACE D. JENNINGS.

A FORGOTTEN SONG

THIS song upon the time-worn page doth ring
 With that enchanted youth age takes away
 Forever from our hearts. The hand is clay
 Which wrote it long ago; yet the words sing,
 And the blithe beauty of it now doth bring
 Back to my heart remembrance of a day
 Whose happy hours rang with exuberant May—
 Eternal youth—the lyric cry of spring.

How meagre are the wages that we give
 To those who write their thoughts out for our joy!
 We give a little praise with its alloy
 Of scorn; a little gold that they may live;
 And then—forgetfulness; we know them not. . . .
 Poet, by me thy name be unforget!

CARLTON CATTNACH FOWLER.



THE STILLY NIGHT

“THE night after my wife went to visit her sister, over at Good Intent, and took the children with her,” said the man with the thin, wan hair and retiring chin, “the house was so still that, as I sat out on the back porch with my feet cocked up on the railing—something, by the way, that I had almost got out of the notion of doing—I could hear the portrait of my wife’s first husband, that was hanging on the north wall of the parlor, chuckling in a self-satisfied sort of way.”



STRONG CONTRAST

“I’M dreadfully excited,” remarked the Thrilling Short Story to the Poem.
 “How are you?”
 “Oh, I’m composed,” was the Poem’s reply.



MANY a man hides his virtues under a bushel to disguise the fact that he might have used a thimble.

THE ACTRESS THAT REMEMBERED

By Viola Roseboro'

THE managerial partners were consulting together about the cast of the new play. It was in the old days, fifteen, eighteen years ago—something like that—a long time in the theatrical world, a whole era as things have gone in New York. These were the managers of one of the old stock companies, Callahan and Golden—Jerry Callahan and A. Golden. Bets were sometimes offered on the Rialto—the south side of Union Square was counted as the Rialto then—as to whether the “A” stood for Abraham or Aaron, and some people cherished a tradition that Golden’s patronymic in earlier, more obscure days had ended in “stein.” A. Golden revealed nothing on these points. A. Golden was not given to revelations other than such as strictly forwarded his own business.

He and the Irishman, both in their shirt sleeves, Callahan smoking, faced each other now from their respective, time-worn desks—the old theatre was too proud an institution to belittle its traditions with new office furniture. Amy Rintoul’s case was under discussion; it was the only point in the business requiring discussion.

Amy Rintoul was the leading lady of the company, and had been for years, as most theatre-goers knew only too well. Don’t we all keep tab on a popular actress’s seasons of service, watching for the time to turn our thumbs down with something of the old cruel elation of the arena?

“I’d hate the worst in the world to go back on Amy,” said Callahan. “Aw, damn it, the girl’s that soft and tender—she never was fit for the

rough sides of this business.” Callahan threw his ashes toward a cuspidor with a vicious jerk.

Golden did not look up from the manicuring operations he was carefully conducting. “She’s too old for Fillette,” he said.

Callahan was big and red, and in his day had been good for a very pretty bout with the gloves, and even without them, on occasion, had administered chastisement to the injudicious. Now he looked sidewise across at his partner, doubled up a big hairy fist before him, looked at it and back again to the short, thick-set, leaden-skinned, silent man. The demonstration was for Callahan’s own private satisfaction; he had no intention of distracting Golden from his toilet. Callahan was the head of the firm, but Golden was the coming man, and already far more powerful than his contract of partnership suggested. He “arrived” long ago, it may be mentioned, and for years past had dominated his world to a degree that more than justified Jerry Callahan’s astuteness in taking him into the firm. After all, though it pleased him to double up his fist, Callahan did not quite forget now the reasoning that had led him to that step.

“You bet,” he had said in philosophic generalization, “you bet there’re good reasons why the Irish and the Jews are always pullin’ off jobs together. And true for you it’s not for the love they bear each other, either. But the Irish they furnish the blarney, for one thing; some Jews have plenty of that, too, but somehow the brand ain’t popular. But the trou-

ble with the poor Mick is that with the best will in the world to deceive, it's always himself that's liable to be took in with his own soft soap—he gets to meanin' the half of what he says before he knows it. But a Jew partner, that's the trick every time! He's the boy whose feelin's are under control of the meter, and the pressure ain't apt to be heavy, either."

That was the way he had talked when he took Golden into partnership—Golden, who brought no capital but his curious special gifts for the business, and who already was becoming a power.

So now after doubling his fist, Callahan returned to mere verbal eloquence.

"You're after forgettin', I'm thinkin', how she pulled us out last year with that old skate, 'Fast Friends.' She was the youngest-lookin' leadin' woman in New York, and a fine thing for us that she was."

"Delia was romping young. That's easy, but Fillette's got to be a heroic child. That's hard for a middle-aged woman, and Rintoul never was heroic that I ever heard of."

Golden spoke without color—stating facts colorlessly was his special, one might say his only form of conversation. He shut his knife now, rammed it into his trousers pocket, stretched out his short heavy legs before him and stared at his shoes. Perhaps he was remembering that they cost \$3.62. No one ever made very confident guesses as to what A. Golden was thinking.

He was not an example of the frequent good looks of his race. His features were as if molded out of dough, but his dull little gray eyes, once he turned them on yours, were not the eyes of a nobody. They don't describe well, but when you meet them all unaccountably it seems quite improbable that A. Golden feels as insignificant as you find you do yourself.

Did Callahan want his way? Doubtless, but had he not taken Golden to his managerial bosom for the express sake of his cold judgment on just such

issues as this? Surely, but then you see it remained for Callahan to find out how fixed was this judgment against poor Amy Rintoul. And if it came to the question of Golden's business, it certainly was Callahan's view that a main part of it was to let himself, Callahan, out of as much dirty work as could be shouldered upon his friends. To fight against Amy's humiliation was a piece of self-indulgence. Golden would never let him pay too high.

"Who do you want for Fillette?" Callahan asked, after a sullen silence.

Counting Amy out, there certainly was no one in the company but Grace Gannon for the part. Golden was supposed by various talkative people to favor Grace Gannon. Now, despite a gleam in his dull eyes, he contented himself with simply speaking her name: "Grace Gannon."

"Lord, the girl's that green! Turn her loose in a field and the cows would eat her! She to play a French demoiselle!" But Callahan's tone was not the tone of repudiation; rather, it spoke bitter acceptance.

"She'll whoop up the big scenes. The public don't care much about the finish. She'll do." Golden had just about so much pow-wow-ing to get through with on an occasion like this and he brought to it endless patience. Nevertheless, the last sentence was spoken with a final accent.

"My public cares about finish, I can tell you," Callahan answered, with the irritable snap of a yielding opponent. The Irishman knew a good deal about acting and found the cultivation of it in his theatre pleasant. Golden, ugly and heavy and silent, knew more of the histrionic art than any Irishman this town ever saw; but there was nothing reckless in his attachment to it.

"The old companies will go to the wall," he said, "unless they learn to play down to the public, the big public."

Callahan got up and began filling his vest pocket with matches. Something one must call a snort was his only last protest. The meeting was adjourned

with Golden victor. It was perfectly understood that Grace Gannon was to play Fillette.

In those days we had more good acting than we have ever seen since, but our plays were mainly made in France and much deteriorated by the time they reached us. Sometimes we "adapted" them; sometimes we only anglicized their language and, in the interests of propriety, eviscerated their situations. Callahan and Golden's new play, "A Daughter of Her Country," was an uncommon find, since no illicit love affair had to be manipulated to meet the American scruples of those ancient and curious times. The plot turned, to put it most baldly, on the exalted defiance of convention with which, in a strange crisis during the Franco-Prussian war, a young girl succors her country's soldiers. There were good chances for the "whooping up" Grace Gannon's mechanical energy was sure to achieve.

The managers had not wasted breath discussing what Amy Rintoul would do with the part; they knew, or thought they did. Amy was exquisite; she would play it with a sincerity that is the rarest of merits in portraying any young girl; she would make this one's immolation of her convent-bred modesties most holy and touching in its rapt patriotism; but—but they had seen Amy play a great many young women, and her fire was not what even her worshipers praised. Golden had something on his side if he thought that here was a call for the genius that cuts the heart-strings; if the cry of the girl for France and the stricken sons of France could not do that, why, A. Golden was for youth and claptrap; oratorical points made with a club and by a pretty girl could count on a remunerative kind of popularity. It was the end of the season, the last of May. The parts would be given out for summer study. If Amy Rintoul "kicked" at being cast for the nun—the Sister had some excellent lines—why, she had the summer to make any arrangements she could, and the managers would have the same time for filling her place. Trust A.

Golden for springing his coup when he could not be stampeded.

Two days after the managerial conference Amy Rintoul woke slowly out of a late heavy sleep. She had lain awake most of the night; staring through the darkness she faced direful facts. Facing facts was an unaccustomed exercise. She cultivated the habit of illusions. She had a good head, had this charming woman, but she communicated with her intellectual perceptions as little as possible. Ugly truths were the one thing she hated; literally, the one thing. She was the softest creature! She forgave all manner of injuries; not "as a Christian," as Wanba was willing to do, but the very memory of them was drowned out in the outflow of her own boundless kindness. Lies, impositions, base schemes to injure, even—most wonderful of all—professional belittlement and professional triumphs over her, all these the offender could count on wiping out with a soft word. Above all he was safe if he would in any way call upon her generosity, appeal to her sympathy—borrow money of her, say. But the person who stated the disagreeable to Amy might wait long before he was taken into favor again, and any risk of a repetition of his offense was enough to make her always avoid him.

Yet it was characteristic that there alone in the night she at last looked the worst in the face, for her nature had many little used possibilities. She had seen Grace Gannon that day, and in an instant she felt sure that Grace expected to play Fillette, and probably Grace had good grounds for her confidence. Amy was an actress by power of "making believe," and she had always made believe she was young. She had been considerably older than was generally known when, after her father's death, she went on the stage; so there was a margin for real deception, and she had taken advantage of it to the full. But in the mere interest of the agreeable, the agreeable to herself, she had gone far beyond the plausible in her assumptions. And yet, poor girl, you might say she was true to

something more real than the years; for she was young by temperament—beautifully, fatally young. Except in rare moments when an unfamiliar Amy suddenly appeared on the scene, usually for decisive action, there seemed no possibility of maturity in her. All her successes were in markedly youthful parts. That had been for long intoxicatingly delightful, as time crept on defeated. But time was winning at last, and now, now what was to become of a woman who would be absurd as a “leading heavy,” who could hope to do nothing above the commonplace in any part commensurate with her age?

It is a terrible thing to have been young so long, and to have all the sweetness of life, the life of the woman and the life of the artist bound up in youth. Oh, it is surely a good thing to have the gift of taking the seasons as they come!

Amy had gone to sleep at last in a kind of passive, worn-out despair; the end of hope, seen in the deep night hours when the ameliorating commonplaces of life fall away, is a black end to stronger people than Amy Rintoul.

But she awoke to feelings more complicated. First, before consciousness was mastered there was that bitter groping which tortures the unhappy, as, coming out of sleep, they slowly take in all anew the height and depth of their undoing. But her miserable bewilderment was broken in upon by music that for an instant seemed divine and brought a tumult of emotion, high sorrow and deep joy, feelings fresh and noble, and far from this ugly cankerous suffering that had been gnawing her heart even in sleep. Then she was awake, and in the next room old Irish Ellen was singing softly, singing with her thread of a voice such a commonplace old tune. There is a generation that to its last representative on earth will never feel commonplace when they hear that song, “Tramp, Tramp, Tramp, the Boys Are Marching!” The days, the days that are gone! the days when that old song was tuned to the throbs of a nation’s hearts—high

hearts, mad hearts, breaking hearts! What was it to Amy? What was she thinking as she lay and listened?

She came forth fresh and tranquil, “like a flower”—she was always being compared to a flower, even by people not habitually hyperbolic. These days she was as a flower that begins to wither if you scan it, yet remains still fair and sweet. Her mood was one of her reactions; she could hide away almost any trouble from herself for one hour and enjoy what the hour had to give. Now it was her breakfast, and the beauty of the morning, and the temperament that made any miracle she desired seem probable.

She overheard her mother and Ellen talking about tomorrow being Memorial Day. That was what had set Ellen singing war songs. Ellen had been in the family thirty years; she had known Mrs. Rintoul’s brother, who was killed at Fort Donelson, and the nephew that died in Andersonville. She had had kin of her own in the Irish Brigade. She and Mrs. Rintoul always had quiet talks and little sacred journeyings between themselves as the commemorative day of the dead came around. Amy—well, Amy was always treated, and always treated them as one sympathizing with them from a distance, one who could, of course, do no better than that. Women can do wonderful things in living their fiction; marvelous artists in such kind are as common among them as blackberries. No turn of an eyelash disturbed the front with which this feminine household lived out its complicated lies; though, naturally, facts as patent as a cat jumping out of a bag were bound sometimes to confront them. But they never blinked, not one of them.

This morning the new play was to be read to the company. After the reading the parts would be distributed; Fillette would go to Grace Gannon; disaster come upon Amy Rintoul? For there was scarce a question that Amy’s professional standing would be forever altered, even irretrievably lost if she were defeated on the issue of

this part. Her mother, as they prepared to leave the house, watched her with anxious eyes, but Amy was gently, preoccupiedly inscrutable.

The reading took place on the stage, a daytime stage, deep in gloom, the house yawning black beyond. Over the stage manager's table down in front was a single yellow flare of gas. Most of the company were gathered and sitting or strolling about. Big Jerry Callahan, spruce and clean-shaven, moved among them like a jolly host, flattering and companionable. The day was warm, and he dwelt on the advantages of the stage for the gathering over greenroom or office. If the reading had been given as usual in crowded greenroom or offices one wonders whether it would have turned out so dramatic an occasion as it actually proved to be. On the stage they were all accustomed to loose the bands of their souls, and on the stage—stimulating fact—there was room enough to be effective. And if the occasion had been as tame as its program—? You may guess for yourself, when you have finished this story, how much difference that would have made to various people, Callahan and Golden among others.

A. Golden sat far back against the rear wall and watched and picked his teeth. There was a little stir of attention when Amy Rintoul entered, a graceful figure, with qualities of fashion and elegance and ladyhood. With her came the little old mother, the simple, kind old gentlewoman. Mrs. Rintoul was very popular with the "profession" whom she never understood in the least. They were far from minding that—they were content to understand her, and they appreciatively studied her and her manners for professional purposes. The Rintouls belonged by birth and association to circles somewhat more distinguished, and also more conservative, than did most of Amy's professional associates. With the best will in the world and the most gracious tact, Amy was not always able to make her social quality either forgotten or for-

given. But for the old mother who stood in no one's way, who was so easily pleased, so delighted to please, they had only good will and sympathy. She was an uncommonly cheery old lady, but there was ground for the commiseration which, behind her back, the players expressed for her. There was no doubt that for Amy's sake she put unnatural checks on her conversation, was always on her guard in talking of the past lest she give Amy away. And she had come to the time of life when to talk of the past was an insistent need.

"You can't tell from Amy! She can put up a great front any time, can't she? But look at mama—I think they know the fat's in the fire." One actor expressed this view to another as the two observed the ladies.

Jerry Callahan greeted them gaily, bowed over Mrs. Rintoul's hand, and held Amy's. Amy turned one quick glance of scrutiny on him between her gracious little speeches. For that instant something very different from their usual soft sweetness, something sickeningly piteous, peered hurriedly out of her lovely blue eyes. Perhaps Jerry Callahan's *bonhomie* was a trifle strained.

One of the young men was still absent. Callahan swore a little under his breath, but no one took the delay hard. It was the end of the season, and this was a semi-social occasion without the strenuousness of a rehearsal. A group of the "principals" gathered about the stage manager, down by the gas jet. Golden strolled up and stood near. Unconsciously they were setting the stage for a brief improvisation that was to precede the reading of "A Daughter of Her Country."

"What are those stands for out in the square?" someone happened to ask.

"Tomorrow's Decoration Day," a man answered; adding, "awful bore when you have to run about town the way I shall tomorrow—cars blocked, brass blaring, horses frightened, children underfoot."

"I haven't anything to say against

the one holiday that does not mean a matinee." It was Callahan who, with a smile, gave out this popular sentiment; it was met now, however, with jeers, as being but a hollow mockery in a manager's mouth.

"Spare me the Fourth, and I'll forgive the rest."

The little smart speeches were coming off briskly from one and another.

"You'll be running about town tomorrow, I suppose, getting your rackets and your clothes and your novels together for your summer flitting?" Amy Rintoul was speaking to the first complainant suavely, but with rather an odd emphasis.

"Particularly his clothes!" cried someone merrily, and there was a laugh at the expense of the dandy.

"Come to Canada for the Fourth," said a young Englishman to Grace Gannon; it was she who had especially prayed to be spared that one festival.

"I'd like to," she answered.

"Curious"—the Englishman was speaking in a smiling aside to Callahan—"curious how—well, how unsentimental the individual American is."

"Oh, we get tired talking off with our mouths sometimes," Callahan was at least not going to be patronized as a fellow-alien by an Englishman.

"The worst of war seems to be the holidays it creates." The cub of the company, a boy trying to appear a man and always anxious to please, contributed this effort at epigram.

He spoke just as Callahan gave his growl; the tone of the little god of their world arrested attention. They were all, all but Amy, trying to make out how he had snubbed their confrère, and there was a moment's silence. Across it cut Amy's voice with astonishing timbre and import:

"I'm ashamed, ashamed of you all! Americans, scoffing at the Fourth, mocking the memorial of the dead!" Her voice broke, and she pressed her lips close to still their quivering.

Everyone was staring at her in amazement; her light veil was pushed back awry and her face was white but

for the delicate spots of rouge that stood out now in telltale relief. Golden shifted his position to scrutinize her better; no one else moved.

Amy's voice came clear when she said quietly: "I could not stand here and say nothing. You must forgive me if I'm rude; but it's the dead, all those thousands and thousands and thousands of dead men in their soldiers' graves I remember." Her voice quavered again; evidently she had been too moved for an immediate resumption of a drawing-room manner.

"Egg her on," said Golden in the Englishman's ear.

"But, Miss Rintoul," he obediently and flippantly began, "patriotism is a selfish, narrow sentiment——"

Amy looked at him. "'And the worst of war,'" she quoted, "'is the celebrations it inflicts upon us!' Child," she turned to Grace Gannon, and with a hand on the girl's arm was speaking for the first time in her life as an older to a younger woman, "you don't want to leave your country to get away from the Fourth of July." There was a pretense of talk among the others now, but they were all really intent on Amy in her novel phase. "It means things—oh, you must feel that! Gunpowder may not be very pleasant, but after all it is not so unfitting." She turned her eyes from Grace's shallow hard ones to the sympathetic face of Gates, the old comedian. "After all," she said, her voice growing tense again, "the smell and the sound of it have drenched a million Americans as they drew their last breath."

The whole company frankly gave her their attention again; they were all but ready to give her a round of applause—oh, no, not ironically. Actor folk are not cynical; they believe in emotion. They knew Amy; they saw how strangely she was exalted out of herself; they had some shrewd idea as to how, out of many emotions and a crucial strain, the mood had been wrought.

Golden touched the Englishman's elbow; that young man began par-

rot-like again on his one note; as an improvising arguer he was not brilliant.

"But, Miss Rintoul, patriotism is all out of date; we should work for humanity at large."

Grace Gannon took up the cue; she was going to play leading business and now was the time to compensate herself for her years of subservient tribute at Amy Rintoul's shrine.

"Oh, Amy is so old-fashioned," she cried, with artificial sweetness; "we're doing the country no harm, dear, though we're not veterans of 1861."

Even the men, being actors, comprehended that a feminine dagger had struck deep. A curious instinct to dress the stage, to give the scene a fair chance, showed itself. Only Amy stood quite still.

"I happen to talk like a veteran, Grace, because I am one!"

Amy held the house; she, too, now in this moment of tragic abandonment, showed the human instinct for the dramatic, inculcated by the training of a lifetime. She was simpler and sincerer than most of us Anglo-Saxons can be when putting our hearts into words.

"I can't expect you to feel as I do"—level and soft were her tones—"because, you see, I remember—I remember the war, from end to end!"

All the rest were still and grave; the last minute had wrought a social miracle, and for a few seconds longer it was to seem natural that a human being should speak from her heart.

A sob sounded from the shadows; it came from Amy's mother.

"We that remember are forever apart from you that have only heard. You and I know that, Mr. Gates. You fought for the South, and I saw my kin march away against you; but, oh, my God, it is we that remember who are united now! I was a great girl, thinking myself a young lady, when the kind lad who taught me to dance died at the first battle of Bull Run. At last let me stand with those who know what a country

means. To you gentlemen"—she spoke with serious courtesy—"English and Irish and Hebrew, these memories of ours may be tiresome, but it even less becomes you to complain of our flags and our tears——"

"Oh, Lord, Amy, I fought through three years of it under Francis Meagher!" It was Callahan pressing toward her and almost pleading for absolution. "I'll march tomorrow, so help me, I will! It's this cursed show business that puts all the real things out of a man's head!"

"I didn't know," said Amy, as she put her hand in his; "you can say what you like hereafter for all of me, Jerry."

"You're the bravest yet, Amy." Their talk was private now in the midst of general interchange. "By St. Patrick's Day in the Morning, I'll stand by you, my girl, till the last gun's fired!"

Amy's exaltation was all gone; she answered almost listlessly:

"I'll not hold you to that, Jerry. There's no use fighting too long. I was brave enough, and I fancy I've fallen on the field. Mother thinks so. See, she can't pull herself together. No, I can't see either, Jerry, any good reason why this should make any difference; but the world goes on bad reasons more often than not. Probably you've already fought for me in vain, and I was out of the running before I came. Don't say anything—never mind. I've known trouble was coming."

She spoke at the last without looking at Callahan, and he gnawed his mustache in silence. His partner came near and Amy addressed him:

"Mr. Golden, I'm not fit to stay here—I've read the piece in the French, I——"

"Certainly, Miss Rintoul," said A. Golden; "but let me get you your part. Take that with you."

Amy sank into a chair, her dilated eyes following the Jew. This was the dreadful moment! Someone spoke to her; she did not hear him. Callahan went to the table with Golden.

The Irishman moistened his lips; he cleared his throat, but Golden spoke first.

"She'll make a great Fillette," he said, colorless as ever; "she's learned how today."

"And she'll remember! She'll make the most of the experience," whispered Callahan eagerly.

"Trust an old actress for that."

And A. Golden gave one of his semi-annual gleams of a smile.

As Fillette, Amy outclassed all her former triumphs. She made a fortune for her managers, she was very happy, and her inborn faith that all would surely come right for her was justified to the last. For before a second season came around she died.



LES PAPILLONS NOIRS

JE vois autour de moi des ombres
S'agiter désespérément;
Elles sont lugubres et sombres
Et sanglottent éperdument.

Elles ont des regards étranges;
On dirait des miroirs profonds
Qui reflètent l'âme des anges
Ou l'amertume des démons.

Ce sont nos rêves, nos chimères;
Et nos désirs inassouvis;
Les regrets d'espoirs éphémères
Qui trop tôt nous furent ravis.

Ce sont les intimes pensées
Pleines d'impossibles vœux
Qui viennent aux âmes blessées
Où volent des papillons noirs.

A. LARCHER.



TO SECURE A HEARING

MINERVA sprang fully armed from the brain of Jove.

"Does this mean war?" asked one of the divinities timidly.

"Not at all," replied the goddess. "I am going to call a Peace Conference, and I merely want to be equipped so that folks will pay some attention to what I say."

BEHOLD THE BEAUTY MAN!

By Kate Masterson

DUNDREARY was the old type of dandy—unknown to children of a later growth. With the typical old maid—that fluttering, fainting thing—the bewhiskered fop of twenty-five years ago, his silk hat a trifle to one side, his step mincing, his eye ogling and his cane twirling, has stepped from prose and poesy into obscurity.

In real life we meet once in a while some silver-haired and, to our comprehension, overmannered relic of the old-time beau whose talk and whose walk are as much a part of him as the cavortings of a high school horse, and, oddly enough, there is pathos rather than humor in the picture.

For the old beau was at least—heaven save the mark and forgive the term!—a gentleman, and the ruin is beautiful in its memory of lavender-scented, unstrenuous days. We feel that such old gentlemen, representing an era long gone by, should be placed in a conservatory with ivy grown about them to hide time's ravages and give strength to the crumbling clay.

Bunner's old beau, making his round of New Year calls at doors no longer open in greeting to friends, is one of the most charming studies in masculine old age of the former fashion. We have no such old men nowadays. They are playing polo or racing horses to avoid, rather than cultivate, the effete pleasures of modern society.

We became conscious long ago that a new girl had evolved. In place of the fluttering fair one who remained unwed, our time has brought forth the Girl Bachelor—the woman unafraid, whose curling-iron has been beaten

into a latchkey, and whose weapon is a hatpin. Undaunted by mice or men—she can even look janitors in the eye—and independent of the cook, she turns out in her chafing-dish hygienic snacks from tinless cans.

Withal she is a woman; but she guards the secret deep, and its seeking and its finding prove a more fascinating diversion to the adventurous man than tiger-chasing or orchid-hunting used to be when women were more tame.

But in place of the dandy—what? That hybrid growth, the dude, possessed no tithe of the masculinity, the debonair Lotharioism, the charm—for charm he had—of the old beau, who beneath his ruffled shirt front carried an unlimited good-fellowship and the *joie de vivre* of the *bon vivant*, another almost extinct type. The dude was largely collar and tie surmounting a tropic waistcoat, his sex as indeterminate as that of a charlotte russe, his *morale* as innocent as a new-laid egg.

The Johnnie is only a name—an imported, English-labeled brand—as foreign to Americans as are all English jokes. The Football Man was never more than an automatic pruned disappointment, once analyzed beneath his impressive make-up. He always wore his heroship as consciously as a matinee actor, until a great game degenerated into a grandstand show.

But, as the clean-cut, distinct woman arose from evolutionary flames, with a punching-bag instead of a powder-puff as her emblem, so has a new man arisen to the surface—not nobly planned, not good enough even as

a breakfast food for human nature, nevertheless, a type, a male Venus rising from the foam. Behold the Beauty Man!

He came to fill the want that business makes in the life of the fashionable woman—husbandless most of the time because of stocks and bonds and things in Wall Street. A “parlor knight,” some poet named him, but George Ade describes him as a “wrap-holder.” In Byron’s time he was a *cavalier servant*; in London tea-rooms he is a tame cat—necessary as mosquitos—and men and women have grown to appreciate the place he fills so exquisitely. Other men might think it a poor task to purr at women’s beaded feet through long afternoons, but who can say?

In this busy, dollar-digging age we are throwing out no nets for the stars—no, none of us! Our men must work that women may play—play, play! American men spend their lives in skyscraping torture chambers for money to build palaces on Newport rocks and sink Italian gardens in the red mud of New Jersey; and, in the pursuit of the golden fetich, which molders in their vaults, they become as overtrained and stale as the quivering half-back, plunging in the mud with one eye on the reporters’ table and a grimy rubber bubble clasped to his overflated chest.

Women have given over being amused with dogs. The most loved little beast in the bunch is no longer petted as it used to be. It has a dog-boy, a valet and visiting cards, but it occupies its place nowadays not because of its personality but because of its pedigree. Where once it was bathed in perfumed water it is now scrubbed with tar soap, for we have grown violently anti-septic of late, and we look for germs in the very hearts of roses and burn a little sulphur on our altars rather than incense.

On the seat of madame’s victoria the Beauty Man is now as necessary as an overfed pug once was. It is a day of reckless driving, rampant automobiling and vicious cross-town cars.

The little luncheons, the visit to the tailor’s and the milliner’s cannot be altogether manless. Sometimes husbands even flunk at dinners or the opera. The result is inevitable. Behold the Beauty Man!

The Beauty Man toils not, neither does he sin. Mankind has grown to regard him with grateful trust. Everybody knows Jimmie or Tommie or Billie—who, dear boy, wears a bracelet and raises canaries in his flat. His Adonis-like appearance—clad well—is the beginning and end of him. His shape is his fortune; his face better than either his bond or his deed.

Called over a telephone, he answers like a bird, or as birds are popularly supposed to answer. Other men have to be dragged, cajoled, wheedled into putting on a dinner coat or doing a tea at their own homes. Not so the Beauty Man; he is gracious, ever ready, a grown-up Casabianca, who will not leave his post at the mast even at his father’s call.

The Beauty Man is invited out assiduously. You meet him even at smart funerals. He is as necessary to the appearance of a function as the candle shades or the potted plants. If he were absent from certain teas it would be deadly, as though the caterer had forgotten to leave the cream.

Gradually the knowledge of his social importance dawns on him, and he begins to keep a little book, in which he looks when he is asked to some house where he may not be quite sure if the sandwiches are from Sherry’s or home-made—for this makes a gap in the exact *cachet* of a hostess and the capacity of her purse-clasp.

For it must be admitted that the Beauty Man, if he look forward to anything but the upbringing of his canaries, aspires to marry money—not necessarily a fortune, but enough to keep the wolf from the elevator. He knows that beauty is a flower that perisheth, and that new and interesting men are being born every day among the *bourgeois* who go in for that sort of thing.

While his good looks remain, he may

go on making a social market of his superior valeting, but what when the rude winds of winter howl about the castle walls? The Beauty Man is, therefore, secretly nervous beneath his velvet exterior. He keeps a social notebook with records, weights and distances, and concentrates on his game with the clean scent of a spaniel.

Old ladies do much toward the continuance of the Beauty Man. The younger women of society are getting far too keen for soft dalliance, and are given to bridge and the great outdoors. The call of the bunker fills them with healthy aspiration to trudge over the savage grandeur of the links for five hours a day rather than to cultivate man as a footstool.

But older matrons, conservative ones so called, smile on the Beauty Man, and give him mythical positions with actual salaries, as social secretary and what-not, a combination that in-

cludes everything from boot-blackening to scalp treatment.

Truly, a sad story is that of a young woman who married one of these beauties, and with him attended the opera in the first glow of the bridal. Being somewhat over-temperamented, she went into supper later on with her Otho Cushing-spouse, fairly vibrating with that emotional insanity which proceeds from the blend of music and the acute perception we call love. As she sipped her *bisque*, wordless, she noticed a look of extreme agony crossing the Greek-goddy face of her lord. She bent soft-burning eyes upon him. Was he, perhaps, enduring some beautiful, soulful Parsifalic torture, rather than filled with the vulgar ecstasy which possessed her?

"That bally fool of a chef," he murmured, in answer to her questioning gaze, "has forgotten to put any onions in the soup!"



THE BISHOP AND THE JUDGE

OH, when a bishop marries you,
He makes two people glad;
But when a judge divorces you,
He makes four glad, by gad!

HAROLD MELBOURNE.



A DEFINITION

LITTLE CLARENCE (*with the prying mind*)—Pa, what is a tradition?
MR. CALLIPERS—A moss-grown lie, my son.



THERE is a good deal that might go without saying, but very little that does.

A NIGHT CITY

THIS monster of the myriad lights,
 How manifold its mood o' nights;
 Here pain and pleasure jostle free,
 Meek Christliness and villainy,
 Joyance and stern demand for bread,
 The glittering and the better dead;
 A weltering mass that seems to sway
 Blindly, beneath God's starry way.

Is there some thread of plan to bind
 This curious web of humankind,
 And make it beautiful? These cries,
 That inarticulate take the skies,
 Have they their meaning and their song?
 What central fire impels the throng
 Up to some mount where Beauty sits,
 Or down to Shame's most shameful pits?

Look! 'midst the lights gleams forth the truth:
 Whatso they do, whether in sooth
 They seek Perfection, or are bent
 On Mammon, or use devilment
 That drags to hell, this seething world
 Is by one Vision onward whirled,
 And all yon tangle comes to this:
 One huge and hungry hunt for Bliss!

RICHARD BURTON.



THE FORTUNATE CLIENT

FIRST LAWYER—Then your client got a verdict?
 SECOND LAWYER—Yes; but he wouldn't if I had been on the jury.



BY NO MEANS!

MILLIE—Was it a quiet spot where you kissed Tillie?
 WILLIE—No, it was on the mouth!

A ROSE IN ICE

By Herbert D. Ward

“WORTHLEY!” The strident, pulmonary twang vibrated over the reporters’ room, in which clouds of tobacco smoke swayed restlessly to and fro. The pulse of every man there waiting for an assignment beat quicker at the sound of the city editor’s voice. John Worthley started as he used to do at the trainer’s sharp command, hurried to his chief, and stood respectfully before the desk. John was six feet three, weighed two hundred and thirty pounds, and had not an ounce of superfluous flesh upon him. For three years he had played centre rush on the Yale Varsity, and nearly eight months of exasperating reportorial work on the *Daily Magnet* had not whitewashed his ruddy cheeks nor softened his iron muscles. As he stood with an eager air of deference beside his chief he looked exactly like a huge, overgrown schoolboy waiting for wisdom to spurt from the lips of an anemic, undersized schoolmaster, whose lungs had revolted at the atmosphere he knew not how to leave.

John Worthley was generally assigned to prizefights and to those sporting events which seem to be the necessity and are the bane of a great city. Few suspected that Worthley’s soul aspired to the more dignified work of a newspaper office. Football fame and bulk he inwardly detested. He would give anything to change figures and places with the city editor, for instance, whom he could as easily have picked up and throttled as a mastiff might a toy spaniel.

On the other hand, the city editor envied Worthley his youth, his strength

and his future, and perhaps he showed it a little in the wistful twitching of his eyes as he looked up at the giant before him, whom he was in the habit of ordering as no housewife dares order her cook.

“Look here, Worthley,” he began, “do you know anything about dogs?”

John’s face lighted with the joy of one who loves and understands dogs as you do friends.

“Try me!” he answered concisely. Words were not wasted in that office. The city editor nodded and looked his “sub” over with good-natured jealousy, as he had done a hundred times before.

“Then you go and cover the Dog Show. It begins tomorrow, and I want it thoroughly done. Be particular about the Boston terriers and the Russian wolfhounds. Slash the judges all you can, and steer the artist your own way.” He turned to his desk, for he had finished the subject; but John remained standing.

“I can do the dogs all right”—John spoke in honest fear—“but I’m no good on the society act.”

The city editor did not look up at the Titan’s troubled face.

“Don’t worry about that,” he said, with a faint smile. “I’ve assigned the gush and clothes to an expert. You cover the dogs. That’s all you have to do.”

With a deferential “Thank you, sir,” John took his dismissal and proceeded to look up the last year’s files of the paper to see how much space and how many pictures he would be allowed. He had become too wise to ask elementary questions. His whole

training had been to obey, and to do it with his mouth tight.

At nine o'clock the next morning John Worthley swung up to Madison Square Garden; he looked like a modern Hercules. A three-mile walk from his uptown boarding-house had brought the hard, ruddy color to his cheeks, and his eyes sparkled like stars on a frosty night. He was the kind of a man whom matinee girls rave about. Why, for three years he had been the object of that sort of adulation which sensitive, hothouse women lavish upon brute force, and yet there was nothing gentler in the brute creation than John Worthley, who shrank from the fluttering sex as a woman does from a mouse. He understood men and how to push and drive and smash them, if necessary. But a woman! Heaven protect him from an encounter!

For a moment or so John stopped at the Fourth avenue entrance, watching the dogs arrive. Big dogs, little dogs, hairy dogs, smooth dogs, cross dogs, gentle dogs—dogs in crates, and dogs in arms and at the leash, were ushered in to take their places in the great and yappy show.

As he stood there absorbed in this passing canine pageant a smart brougham drove up, drawn by a pair of over-checked, foaming bays and topped by a plum-colored coachman and footman with rosettes in their beavers. The carriage came to a nervous halt right where John was standing. The footman jumped lightly for the door. The horses were so highly checked that they were in torture, and danced restlessly in the keen air as the driver brought them sharply up with the curb to keep them from plunging. John's coat was flecked with foam, and his gentle heart was disgusted at this cruel, fashionable exhibit. Instinctively his eyes turned to the occupants of the carriage, for he wondered who they might be. As he did so he encountered a haughty stare from the most beautiful eyes he had ever seen in his life. It was the kind of a look that brushed him away as if he had been a fly. It was an expression that

can only be successfully cultivated by those who by their birth, their position and their wealth are absolutely unassailable.

She was that type of carmine brunette whose jet hair and oriental coloring seem as much out of place in our bleak climate as an orange blossom in Labrador. But her red lips pressed proudly together, her dark eyes haughtily controlled, her ample furs producing an impression of warmth that her manner declined—these proclaimed that her nature belied her type and was in harmony with the cutting atmosphere. In her arms lay one of those toy ruby spaniels that thrive only upon love and luxury.

"Elise"—the young patrician spoke to her maid opposite—"give Johnson the cage. There! You step out and take the little darling. Don't let him down for your life!"

Somewhat abashed and greatly amused, John Worthley turned aside so as not to intrude into the sacred process of introducing another pampered pet into the toy department of the Dog Show. Just as the maid stepped out and was in the act of receiving the ulstered spaniel in her arms, the horses reared, and the coachman brought his whip smartly down upon their necks to steady them. At the touch of the lash they gave an impatient leap ahead.

"Elise!" cried the girl in horror, aroused from her cold composure—"the precious!" The carriage bounded a few feet ahead, and the dog, balanced at that instant between the four eager hands, fell between them with an agonizing squeal, dropped upon the sidewalk and rolled helplessly into the gutter. In the horror of the situation the French maid turned away with a shriek and put her hands to her face, expecting the helpless spaniel to be run over at the next instant. Instinctively the footman gave the open carriage door a bang as the horses jumped, thus imprisoning his mistress.

But John Worthley leaped for the dog. In that preliminary struggle when the horses were backing and

prancing, measuring their ability to bolt against the pitiless curb, the dog crouched, terrified and helpless, awaiting its doom. John had made many a desperate plunge through centre, but none quicker than this dart for the dog. He was not too soon, for he caught the little thing by its ulster just as the wheels were upon it. Then—for he was trained to think in a rush—he tucked the dog into the breast of his overcoat, and in three steps was at the head of the plunging pair.

"Put that whip down, you fool!" he yelled at the coachman. "Now loose those reins!" With a firm hand at each bit he was easily master of the situation.

John Worthley was triumphant and angry as he quieted the maddened horses. He did not hear the carriage door open nor the swish of approaching skirts.

"Curse these curbs, and confound these overhead checks!" he said aloud to himself. "They ought to be stopped by law!"

"Sir!"

John still stood in the half-frozen mud, each hand caressing the snorting nostrils of the pacified pair and lingering near enough to the bits in order to hold control. From under his neck, like a huge scarfpin, the tiny ruby spaniel blinked and wondered. John turned and looked at the lady boldly. He was so stimulated by the quick battle that he forgot his usual fear in the presence of a woman, and he regarded the girl sternly.

"Will you please give me my dog?" she asked, with flushed hauteur.

"It's a confounded shame to check horses up like this and then curb them in besides. I should think that anyone who likes dogs——"

"Sir!" interrupted the young lady, with a freezing look, "you have my dog."

"Oh, Miss Rosalind——" The maid ran up. "It was not my fault—the gentleman saved Bijou's life."

The young lady's lips quivered a little, but her eyes did not soften. She would never in all her life forgive that

stranger his rebuke. No one could suspect from her manner that her heart beat one whit the faster when she took the shivering spaniel from his hand.

"I thank you for your service." She dismissed him as if he had been a menial.

But John lifted his hat and turned his back upon her. He was puzzled at the conflicting sensations that warred within him. As he passed into the Garden, easily towering above all other men, he still wondered at himself. That was the kind of a woman who would either arouse the demon or the angel in him. Was that icy manner herself? Or was it a mask to cover a heart as passionate, as tender as his own? He smiled indulgently. "What's the odds?" he thought. "I shall never see the witch again, anyhow." Then he opened the catalogue and turned to the ruby spaniel class. Passing his fine eyes down the short list, he soon came to the following announcement:

Bijou—Miss Rosalind Van Twiller.

The reporter looked into space with a vacant, dazed expression.

Why, that must be the only daughter of old Van Twiller, president of the City National and three-quarters owner of the paper on which he worked! He had often heard of Rosalind. Who in New York had not? He remembered that she had been pointed out to him at his last Harvard-Yale game, in which he had made the winning run. She was famed as the coldest, haughtiest girl in the circle in which she was easily the most beautiful, if not one of the richest and most unapproachable. And now, after risking his life for her pet, he had only been rewarded by her eminent stare.

John's heart burned with indignation within him. He clenched his hands. All the diffidence that he had hitherto felt toward women seemed to vanish with his anger at the girl who was so bereft of the finer feelings that belonged to the womanhood he worshiped. He felt as if he could do something brutal if he had a chance,

if only to shock her into a human expression. But the contest between them, if it should come, would be too unequal. If she were only a man—a centre rush! But she was a woman—a glacier! With a fine, independent toss of his head, he thrust her beautiful insolence out of his mind and turned to caress the dogs he loved—dogs who responded to every touch of his tender hand with eager delight.

That afternoon he would proceed to make the aristocratic Boston terriers seem like mongrels to the reading public and to degrade the imperial wolfhounds to the peasant class—that is, if he honestly could. John had spent the previous evening in the public library looking up these breeds, and he felt, in the flush of newly acquired knowledge, that he could give points to the best experts in the sawdust ring.

He had finished his inspection of the effete Boston terriers and was now devoting his whole attention to the magnificent representatives of the noblest race of dogs that civilization has as yet produced. There was the intelligence of a collie, the speed of a deerhound and the strength of a wolf! These Borzois were indeed offspring of the untamed steppes, he thought, when his name was called by a voice that he had not heard for many a weary, plodding month.

"John, old boy, I am perfectly delighted to see you. Where have you kept yourself, old chap?"

John Worthley turned with his lithe motion and grasped his classmate's hand; he gave it a squeeze that made his friend wince with pain. The joy that each felt in the discovery of the other broke down all barriers between them. The newcomer, the product of generations of pampered ease, was dressed in the height of Dog Show fashion; the tip of his silk hat reached barely to the rough giant's chin. Perhaps the best part of a college education is the fact that the two classes, the rich and the poor—those that otherwise might never have come into contact—meet on a common ground and learn to appreciate each other, not as

heirs but as men. Elisha Tailer had become a millionaire at his father's death, which occurred before he had left college, and he was now one of the leaders of the "Four Hundred." No cotillion was complete without him. He and John, as opposite as lead and radium, had been devoted friends at college, and this was the first time they had met since graduation.

"How's your game, old man?" Elisha punched his hero playfully in the ribs. "Dine with me tonight and tell me what you are doing."

John Worthley laughed in the whole-souled way that had won him a lasting college popularity which he little realized. "Oh, I'm only a reporter. Dogs today—prizefights tomorrow. I'm on the *Magnet*."

"By Jove!" Elisha shouted. "You don't say! Why, this is luck! I must introduce——"

John Worthley looked up and around. Direct and plunging, according to his nature, he had seen nothing but his classmate; but now his eyes encountered——

"Miss Van Twiller, allow me——" Elisha Tailer began in his most formal manner—"allow me to present to you my classmate, Mr. Worthley. John, Miss Van Twiller has often seen you and admired you for the last three years. She has told me so herself."

But John was looking straight into the lady's black eyes. A curious self-possession and coldness that was always his during a great game held him now. It was as if he were before an antagonist and every sense must be alert. He felt no diffidence. He felt more alive than he had since he had bidden good-bye to the great gridiron.

He bowed coldly, and after a surcharged silence turned back to his classmate and then allowed a smile to creep over his mouth. But the lady bit her lips slightly and clutched her fingers in her muff. Science is making great strides, and some day a professor will arise and tell us that icicles have feelings, especially when the sun shines.

"I say, old man"—Elisha turned on the two, looking from one to the other

with intimate intuition—"you two act as if you had met each other before and——"

"Elisha Tailer"—a cold voice cut his sentence in two—"you are an exceedingly impertinent young man, and I can dispense with you for—for——"

Elisha gave a long, low whistle; he looked from Rosalind's cold face into John's impenetrable one. Then a smile, both tender and insufferable, invaded his own countenance.

"I see—well, good-bye, my children." He lifted his daintily gloved hand affectionately up to John's rough shoulder.

"I say, Rose"—he looked up at the girl mockingly—"this time you're up against the real thing. I don't believe there's a woman in the world that Worthley would give an inch to if he will make up his mind to buck the line."

Then, with an exaggerated and courtly bow, his silk hat almost swept the sawdust and young Tailer was gone.

John Worthley looked straight at the Russian wolfhounds. He was thinking mightily. He would not speak first. He would rather die. The girl regarded the giant mockingly. Her eyes measured his gentleness, his strength—his will. In the silence her expression grew hard and then soft. It was the eternal conflict of summer and winter—heart and habit. Then a voice that seemed to proceed from another woman said:

"Don't you want to come and be formally introduced to Bijou, Mr. Worthley?"

John turned as if the ball had just been put into play. Was she a woman or a cold storage warehouse for all human emotion? He looked down into her face as if he were judging her fate instead of his own. There was a fluttering droop of the eyelids—and an evanescent flush under her rich dark skin. These signs made his heart beat violently.

"Yes," he said gravely, "I should like to come."

"I think," said the lady, with an amused twinkle in her black eyes, "that I have seen you several times

before, although I ought to forget it, for you were very rude to me about the horses—don't you think so?"

"Where?" John asked naively. Then he added, "I couldn't help it. I am sorry. It made me furious to see horses checked up like that—so cruel and so useless."

"Is it? I never thought of it before. I have always let the coachman do as he pleased."

"I am glad you think of it now," bravely.

"What would you say if I forgave you, and told you that they should never be checked so again?"

"I should say that I misjudged you." John looked down with racing blood, but the cold glance that he encountered staggered him. He had much to learn about a woman's sleight of heart. "Where did you see me before?" he managed to stammer, with pardonable curiosity. They passed up the stairs to the side gallery.

"Oh—" The girl hesitated as if trying to recall the circumstance with difficulty. "At the last Harvard game in New Haven. Let me see—didn't you make a forty-yard run through centre to the first yard line?"

"I have a dim recollection of something of the kind." John's cheek burned at the memory of that great day when Yale won out. His muscles instinctively tightened.

"And then," proceeded the girl nonchalantly, although her dark color proclaimed a little enthusiasm, "don't you remember the year before at Harvard when you stopped that run a foot from the goal, and they didn't gain an inch, and lost the ball on three downs? That was splendid. I love Yale."

"Do you?" asked John innocently. "Why, so do I. Isn't that strange? I didn't suppose you could love anything."

Just at that moment, when he thought he had a bond of union, she stopped before a little ruby spaniel who was sleeping away the long hours of separation from his home.

"Bijou! Oh, you darling! Sit up. Make a smoke face! I love Bijou, sir."

The little red dog, mad with delight at seeing his mistress, barked shrilly, and then sitting up on his haunches drew his lips apart, showing his teeth in the most grotesque of smiles. John laughed heartily.

"What a funny little dog!" he said, trying his best to compliment. "I never had a *little* dog. I wouldn't know what to do with it. I should be afraid of its getting lost."

"Papa taught him the smoke smile by blowing tobacco in his face," explained Miss Van Twiller. "We *couldn't* lose him. The maid never leaves him out of her sight. Bijou is more nuisance than a baby. I couldn't live without him. He is the only creature that entertains me. Aren't you, Bijou?"

The pampered dog gave his mistress a look of idiotic content.

John sighed and regarded the dog jealously. Such a girl who loved a dog so devotedly could have a heart for—he dared not finish the thought.

"There!" she said. "You have seen Bijou. Do you think that his blue ribbon is becoming to him? I know you are busy. Now make your bow to the first prize ruby and I won't keep you any more."

"Can't I—just a little while?" pleaded the reporter eagerly.

The young lady flashed on him a slow, mocking smile. "Not—not today."

But John Worthley recovered himself. He gave his new acquaintance a proud, formal bow, turned his back sturdily and went his way. If he had been ill-bred enough to turn he would have surprised a young lady's eyes following his stalwart figure wistfully.

John Worthley walked on springs. The Dog Show, his first really important assignment, was over, and the city editor had been pleased to say that he had done quite well. Such praise, rare in an office where sentiment plays no part in the distribution of salaries, meant a speedy advancement, if he could only keep the pace. He had swept the Boston ter-

rier off the face of the earth, he had raised the wolfhound to the canine pinnacle on which the imperial race belonged, and he had slashed with a virulent pen the unfortunate judges who did not deem a shrinking, cuddling red toy spaniel called Bijou worthy of the first prize in the ruby class. And now there had come to him in consequence of this excellent work an assignment that pleased him greatly, and that made him the envy of the young corps of reporters of which he was junior.

Every autumn the Dog Show is followed by an epidemic of dog stealing. Valuable dogs that have been catalogued are decoyed, snatched, kidnapped, and held for ransom by dog banditti, who crawl by day and hide by night. To John Worthley his paper had given the task of running these snatchers to their kennels and delivering them up to justice.

"It will be dangerous," said the city editor gravely. "The police won't touch it; but I guess," glancing up at the young man's massive figure, "you'll pull through all right."

John Worthley rejoiced in his mission. Here was a chance for him to use all the brains, all the adroitness and presence of mind that he possessed. He was to be a detective and an avenger. He would rather have been assigned to the laboratories that carve and torture dogs alive in the name of "scientific achievement." But this was better than nothing, and he threw his whole heart into his new and perilous duty.

John Worthley had imagination as well as heart. Of all the animals in the world the dog is the only one that has voluntarily linked its fate to man. It is the only animal that loves man. It loves him as a god. The dog offers up its soul at the feet of the king it adores. Like a woman, but with more exclusiveness and singleness of heart, its love is its life. So, to deprive a dog of his home is to inflict a cruelty that exceeds almost any other of which the mind can conceive. To take a dog into one's life is to assume a re-

sponsibility the import of which we too seldom realize. The child grows and goes. But the dog stays and grows old in our service. This service is that of love that flows into our hearts as eagerly as a river flows into the sea. It is a love that adapts itself to all our moods, that rejoices in the little it receives, compared with which its own gift is as a year to a day. It is a love that forgives all disappointments and inattention, that waits all day for the master's footstep and the chance of kissing his hand, that has repressed all instincts and most desires for the sake of the idol to whom its life is devoted. I use the word "devoted" in a religious sense, for nuns and monks immured in cells have not cut themselves more utterly off from their world for the sake of their God than the dog has for his.

Now, to snatch that creature, all heart and all love, suddenly from his home and the objects of his affection is a demoniac act, and there is no punishment that can fit such a crime. Supposing—and here John Worthley's heart hammered at the thought—that Bijou—tender, adoring little red spaniel, whose heart was a dozen times too large for its curly body—should be seized from its silken bed by one of these dog banditti and immured in some den alone, among rough, woolly strangers who threatened and whipped and swore—why, the torture the little creature would suffer would be equal to that when, if unanesthetized, it were placed upon an operating table and its nerves torn to pieces.

So John put on his roughest clothes, and an old blue sweater with a big white "Y" on it of which he was pardonably vain, and which had never been trailed in the dirt of defeat, and strode on his mission, looking, for all the world, like a great, hulking laborer seeking employment. Underneath the lapel of his vest he had his reporter's badge hidden for an emergency. It was the only weapon he carried. He looked grimly at his huge fists, and smiled in the consciousness of his strength.

"You might look—" replied the captain commanding the Italian district to John's confidential inquiry. "If not there, try—" continued the officer politely. "There's plenty of them dog-catchers that do a howling trade. We can't bother with them without a special complaint or the boss gives us the tip. See!" with a broad wink which spelled "graft" to the initiated.

With the confidence of youth, and with the courage that four years of Yale training is bound to give to an athlete, John walked up to the darkest and the most dangerous Italian tenement in the city of New York.

At the end of a blind alley the monstrous building reeled. Within its caverns seven hundred submerged souls groped for shelter, where there was room for only a bare hundred. All the nameless odors of filth and crime and disease assailed the clean white man as he entered the pitiless den. John Worthley had made up his plan to pose as a poor medical student seeking to get dogs to vivisection by those subterranean means so well known to laboratory workers. In the narrow black hallway, where breathing already seemed almost a physical impossibility to healthy lungs, he was stopped by a group of foreigners. In an open doorway a crone, who looked like a lost Fate, stood silhouetted against a forbidding background; she had a murderous expression, half smile, half scowl. The men stopped their gabbling and leered at the stranger threateningly. John didn't lose his presence of mind in these surroundings. He advanced a step, and held out both his palms with what he considered a true Oriental gesture of peace, and said, "*Amico*," not knowing what language he was uttering.

"Whatta want?" asked the foremost of the group, relaxing his scowls a little.

"Dog," John answered, with a friendly smile; then, remembering his Latin, "*canis*," he said, and stood, looking intelligent.

The three men narrowly searched

John's face and then exchanged inquiring glances with the lost Fate.

"Ah," said the spokesman, with a cunning leer, "dogga. Whatta for?"

"Hospital," John Worthley replied in as offhand a way as he could, lighting a cigarette for protection. "Bellevue Hospital, savvy? Have a cigarette?"

Each took a cigarette, and each face lighted as it puffed. John now executed a master-stroke by offering one to the lost Fate. This she graciously accepted, and unknotted her tangled features. Nine times out of ten tobacco will accomplish what no other bribe can. You may suspect a dollar bill, but not nicotine.

The men now formed a circle and began to speak and gesticulate furiously. John watched them with an amused smile, not noticing that the lost Fate was dissecting him with the intentness of a fortune-teller. They were evidently disputing as to whom they should recommend. They pointed up—they pointed down. Their cigarettes and their dispute died away at the same time. The spokesman beckoned John with his black claws.

"Comma," he said. The three shuffled ahead. The lost Fate scowled after them.

John Worthley followed close. The light grew dimmer. The atmosphere was suffocating. In the dark he noted his way as well as he could, and unconsciously his great fists clutched themselves and his teeth gritted as he dogged his guides to the lair he sought.

The word "hole" can convey no adequate conception of the den into which John finally stepped. It was a sort of sub-basement, a cavern, an oubliette, from which no sound could filtrate and into which no light could glimmer. A suspended ship's lantern emitted murky rays that were engulfed long before they reached the serrated limit of the cavern's walls. John stood with his back to the ladder by which he had descended. Foul animal odors, the noxious, overbreathed air, the dampness that

chilled by reason of its fatality rather than because of its temperature, fantastic shapes that slunk into the dimness and then stalked into obscurity—all these and more had to be quickly comprehended by a mind that was beginning to appreciate the danger of its undertaking. Why, a minute ago his lungs were full and his ears tingling with the clang of imperative electric gongs; but now he had passed into an eclipse as if the world and all its life and beauty had never been. Most other men would have experienced a corresponding mental adumbration. But the veteran football player had been trained to alertness. The raucous gabble of the men who would murder for their gain as easily as you would snatch a peanut from a stand in passing, punctuated by the half-smothered growls of unseen creatures, only put the reporter upon all the mettle he had.

His guides had awakened the demon of this den, who seemed to be more abject as well as more naturalized than his companions. This man took down the lantern, held it by John's head, inspected him jealously up and down, and then uttered a sigh of disappointment at the signs of poverty.

"You come from medical?"

John nodded.

"You want dog—how many?"

"Can you deliver ten tomorrow at the Bellevue Hospital?"

The bandit's eyes gleamed avariciously.

"At night. About—eleven. Ten dogs, two dollars each."

"All right," John nodded. "I want to see them. Perhaps I'll take one now if it's small enough. I've just got two dollars left." He opened his coat, exhibited a chainless vest and drew out a crumpled bill from where the watch ought to have been.

With an exaggerated gesture of deference the Italian led the way to the edge of the cavern, which reluctantly resolved itself into a series of compartments in each of which a poor dog was bound. Upon their pallets of damp, fetid straw the creatures blinked and

recoiled as their demon approached. John Worthley's heart now began to beat furiously with indignation and with pity. Many of the dogs, in spite of their being dirty and unkempt, showed all the marks of high breeding and a tender home. Their waiting eyes looked up into his face with piteous hope, only to be dashed into despair. John made no sign of his feelings. For the first time in his life he felt within him the capacity for murder. His ears were humming perilously.

From the black corner of the cave, as they approached it, John heard a cry that might have come from a baby's throat. It was as if a soul were pleading to be released from the Inferno. In the increasing light John saw an exquisite little toy ruby spaniel sitting up on its hind legs and pleading as if its heart were broken; tears were running down from its great brown eyes. John's heart gave a great leap. He knew the dog at once. He knew it by its familiar attitude, by the dingy blue ribbon at its throat, by its peculiar collar and by its braided leather leash. In an instant he had bent down, untied the frightened creature, and had raised it to his shoulder with its head under his chin. Then he bent and whispered in the dog's ear:

"Don't you know me, Bijou? Want to go home? I'll take you home."

For answer the pet spaniel, not weighing over three pounds in body, but with a thousand pounds of love concentrated in its little life, uttered the cry of the found—the sound to which only a thief or a vivisector could listen without tears.

But the four Italians crept nearer to the intruder with dark and menacing scowls. And as they closed about him the little red dog clung with desperate claws to his savior's rough coat, pleading for his life.

"I'll take this one," said John, in as easy a manner as possible. "Here's your two dollars."

"No, no," hissed the demon of the den; "this special dog. Hold for ransom. Getta hundred dollars today.

Ver' valuable dog!" He stretched out his arm to grasp the clinging creature.

But the old football player had experience in fending off attacks with a half sweep of his free right hand. He held the wee dog as he would the leathern disk he loved so well and made a break for the ladder, the pack of four after him. At the foot of it he stood and held the maddened banditti at bay. In their eyes he saw the volcanic murder he knew had only been temporarily slumbering. In the murky gleam he saw stilettos flash. His back was against the rounds, and upon his bosom the little victim pleaded piteously. How strong he felt! How glad he was to be alive! Every nerve tingled with the joy of the fight. Like a midsummer's madness the picture of a beautiful face flashed across his retina. It was as if it were a rich, human Jacqueminot that for an instant shut out the snarling faces before him. If she only knew—would she be a rose in ice to him, as she was to the rest of the world—haughty, disdainful, unapproachable? It seemed impossible that he could be torn to pieces by these curs for *her*.

It was not a long fight, but it was a glorious one. At the very onset John felt a hot sting upon his shoulder. This new sensation unlimbered him. It took but a second's time to tuck the toy spaniel within his coat, as he had done once before, and so free his left hand. He thought of the Indian who, with the ball placed within his sweater, made the most sensational touchdown of the season, and all the while his ears could hear the quarter-back repeating mystic numbers while his hands moved like piston strokes.

"You hounds, you!" he kept repeating to himself as he smashed the wavering line. Before he realized it the two remaining men had scattered into the darkness, swearing horribly. It took him but an instant to dart again to the ladder, when the den was plunged in darkness. Then, for the first time, he felt something warm glue his underclothes to his body, and he began to be a little dizzy.

Up he climbed as fast as he could. There was a clutch upon his leg. He gave a vicious kick that was followed by a groan. Again that hot sting, this time within his leg. With a cry he burst open the trap and staggered down the black corridor. He was in the basement. He found the stairs and ran up panting. Behind there was a scuffle of feet that, to his singing ears, sounded like gigantic cockroaches.

Before the outside door that led to liberty the lost Fate stood barring the exit. There was no time for chivalry. Behind, the feet clattered closer and raucous shouts waked the tenement to the intrusion. Taking the hag by the throat John swung the woman behind him like a stone from a catapult and flung her down the narrow passageway into the faces of his pursuers, and thus, for the moment, blocked their advance. A knife whirled by his ear and passed humming into the rotten panel of the door.

But John Worthley, bleeding above and below, with one leap, such as he used to make when "bucking the line," plunged bodily through the door, and dashed down the blind alley into the protecting street.

There a carriage was drawn up. It looked strangely familiar. The unchecked bays no longer pranced, but stood in dignified and comfortable expectancy. As John lunged on the door opened. It took but a glance to recognize the lady of his dreams.

"Quick!" he cried; "they are following me!"

"Mr. Worthley! Why, *Mr. Worthley!*"

"Here's your dog; here's Bijou. I promised him I would save him."

John lurched forward, and a frightful pallor took possession of his ruddy face. Above his collar a red spot grew in intensity.

Then Miss Rosalind Van Twiller woke up. She stretched out a daintily gloved hand and took the young man forcibly by the arm.

"Get in," she commanded, vibrant with anxiety. To the coachman she cried with all the force she could com-

mand: "Burton, whip those horses up! Home!"

When she turned back from the window she saw a little red face peeping out from beneath a rough overcoat that lay strangely still on the seat beside her. For the first time in his life John Worthley had fainted.

John Worthley stared out of the broad window into the Park. He lay in a luxurious invalid's chair, one arm and one leg bandaged so that he could hardly stir. It was the third day since he had lost consciousness, and he was unutterably ashamed of himself.

"To think of my getting stuck here in her father's house! What will she think of me? I've lost that scoop—the city editor will fire me sure." Such gloomy thoughts, interrupted now and then by twitches of pain, had taken all the joy out of John's life. He had never been laid up before, and he was taking it hard, as a perfect animal should.

There was a faint scratching at the door of this Van Twiller guest-room, and a little creature pushed its way in. It came prancing in, wriggling its stubby tail, and with yelps of joy leaped up and began kissing the invalid's face madly.

"Oh, you rat, you! You dear little red rat, you!" exclaimed John, overjoyed at this demonstration. Then the ruby spaniel jumped down, scampered all around the room, and disappeared through the door with a bark of ecstasy. John drew a long sigh of regret. He was beginning to get very dull. With the exception of a white-capped trained nurse, he had seen only the dog and the doctor since he had come to; and once or twice he thought he heard a swish of skirts outside his door. "What an ass she must think I am!" he kept repeating bitterly.

And now the sound of approaching voices came through the open door to ears made keen by pain and waiting.

"So you think he can stand it, doctor? An extra excitement, you know."

"Oh, yes. He'll be out in a week."

"You say he's a pretty good man on the paper?"

John's pulse tingled; for the answer came in the city editor's sharp, imperious voice.

"None better. He's the most promising man we've got. I don't believe there's another one in the city that would have got out of that den alive. It was a big scoop for the paper. The men are all locked up, awaiting Worthley's recovery to be convicted."

"I guess we'll have to do something for him, then."

"You can't shove him too far to suit me. He's——"

"Sh!"

The three men approached the door and came in, followed by the nurse, who bustled ostentatiously.

The eldest of the three walked right up and stood over the reporter, and looked at him with critical kindness.

"So this is the young man who saved Rosalind's dog!"

"Worthley, you haven't met Mr. Van Twiller yet"—the city editor waved his hand introductorily.

"I'm sorry—" John began to stammer.

"Not another word, Mr. Worthley!" Van Twiller put his hand gently on his guest's free shoulder. "We are all under very great obligations to you. The *Magnet* is proud of you. All you have to do is to hurry up and get well. There is a little niche waiting for you when you get back— isn't that so?"

The city editor nodded with a suspicion of moisture in his wary eyes.

There was a timid knock on the door.

"May I come in, papa?"

Caught unawares, John Worthley found himself blushing furiously. Mr. Van Twiller noticed the sudden glow, and it cannot be denied that an ominous pang went through his heart.

"Certainly, my daughter; this is our guest's reception hour. Come right in."

As the young lady glided in, holding the ruby spaniel affectionately in her arms, the city editor and the doc-

tor exchanged glances, stepped aside, and quietly slipped out.

"I have had no chance to thank you. What can I say?" She paused in unprecedented embarrassment.

"We've saved the dog, anyway," John answered stupidly.

"I was just going to ransom him, you know. I went alone. I didn't want anybody to know."

Mr. Van Twiller opened his lips to speak. This was one of the moments when he remembered that he had a motherless girl. Rosalind needed a good scolding, but he saved himself just in time from administering this in the presence of the young man. Instead, he regarded the two very closely.

"But you ransomed *me*!" John blurted out, devouring her beautiful face with unmasked eagerness.

Van Twiller looked at his naive employee—this young man with football in his brawn and the making of a great editor in his brain. The newspaper proprietor remembered his own struggling youth. "Poor," he thought; "but he's a man, anyhow."

There was an obsequious knock at the door. "There's a message for you on the wire, sir. The butler told me to hurry, sir." The picturesque maid softly withdrew.

"You'll have to excuse me," said Van Twiller. "I must leave you for a few moments to my daughter's hospitality."

As the magnate passed out the nurse, with the tact of her profession, was busy at the other end of the great room.

"Miss Van Twiller"—John's heart gave a great leap as he spoke—"I'm sorry I've been such a nuisance. I would do it all over again for *your* dog!" Somehow these remarks did not seem idiotic to either of the two young people.

"You almost gave your life," said the girl in a very low voice. "When I think of it—" then she broke off.

Her color came and went in a series of beautiful transformations. The two looked at each other and for a long moment did not speak.

Then John abruptly said: "Have you ever seen 'A Bit of Old Chelsea'?"

"Why?" asked Rosalind. "Yes—" then she paled.

"Well, you see," John stumbled on, "somehow I couldn't think of you from the very first time I saw you as a 'white-faced, stand-off lady.' I know that is what you pretend to be. I don't think it is what you are. You are so womanly—you are so *you!*" John stopped and breathed hard.

"Once," he continued very slowly, "I went past a florist's window where I saw a cake of ice. In it lay a rose—a Jacqueminot."

Still the girl did not answer.

"It was alive and sweet," persisted

John. "I wanted that rose. I want it now."

Rosalind turned away from the window and looked the wounded man straight in his eager eyes.

"I wish to be to you," she whispered, with great solemnity, "what you think I am."

"Oh, I am so glad—so glad!" In his great weakness and in his great joy John's lips trembled like a boy's.

But now the nurse came up. "He mustn't talk any more now," she said.

"Then I will read to you," said Rosalind. "What shall I read?"

"Read?" John asked happily. "Read me the 'Sonnets from the Portuguese.'"



THE OCEAN LINER

LIKE some bewildered monster of the deep,
Groping to freedom through the baffling tide,
She blunders forth, while nuzzling at her side
The bustling harbor craft about her creep.
Anon she feels her iron pulses leap,
And, symbol of the age's mastering pride,
Looks out to where the ocean stretches wide,
Scorning the fears that in its mystery sleep.

All day with headlong and undoubting haste,
And all the night upon her path she flames
Like some weird shape from olden errantry;
And when some wafted wanderer of the waste
A storm-worn pennant dips afar, proclaims
With raucous voice her strong supremacy.

P. McARTHUR.



SUCCESSFUL

STELLA—Was her marriage a failure?

BELLA—No, indeed; the alimony paid one hundred cents on the dollar.

A MEAN MAN

“THERE is no use talking,” said Mrs. Winkleton, “this room has got to be completely done over.”

They were sitting in the front reception-room as they spoke, on their way upstairs from their dinner, and had stopped for a moment to rest.

“Yes,” said Winkleton; “I suppose that’s so. If you give that progressive euchre party next month that you are talking about I suppose you will want the place to look nice. Still——”

With the caution induced by a married career of some years’ standing Winkleton now began to feel that he had perhaps gone too far toward a possible expenditure—

“Still, perhaps, we had better wait until the fall.”

Mrs. Winkleton was an obedient and economical wife.

“Well, dear,” she said meekly, “if you think we can’t afford it we’ll have to get along.”

She arose and glanced somewhat critically and sadly around the room. The paper did show signs of wear. Two of the chairs needed re-covering. Then, it was rather bare. It needed another piece of furniture.

Winkleton had unconsciously arisen, and his own glance followed that of his wife. And then an impulse came over him, a kind of flood of extravagance that sometimes a wife’s very meekness engenders. He would have the room fixed over. His wife was going away on a visit for a week. During her absence he would have it done, to surprise her. His eye glistened with sudden joy. But his experience prompted him to find out just how Mrs. Winkleton would have the room done. With a simulated air of resignation he said:

“Well, my dear, I suppose we shall have to wait. But it’s rather nice to think of what could be done with this room, isn’t it? Now, suppose we were going ahead to fix it up—just what would you do?”

Mrs. Winkleton turned decisively. There was no doubt in her mind; she had thought it all out.

“Why,” she said, “I would have a plain paper—you know that shade in the Smiths’ front room? Well, like that; with a cream-tinted ceiling. Then I would move the molding up, and have it a gilt with a very fine stripe. This chair I would take out. The others I would have re-covered with about the same pattern as they have at present. Then I would get a new tête-à-tête—you remember that old-fashioned one we saw one day at Plumsey’s—like that.”

Winkleton made a mental note of the total changes required, and the next day his wife had hardly time to get on the train before he was on his way to the upholsterer’s. From thence he went to the decorator’s, and then to the furniture dealer’s. In the short week that followed—a week full of joy for Winkleton in anticipation of his wife’s delight—the transformation was complete, and the room was exactly as if the lady of the house had superintended the matter herself. Winkleton could scarcely wait for her home-coming. Finally, however, the train rolled into the station. Once more they clasped hands. Winkleton trembled with excitement.

“My dear,” he whispered, when they were on the horse-car, “I have a little surprise for you.”

A look of suspicion came into Mrs. Winkleton’s eyes. Her face fell. She had been surprised before by her husband, and always dreaded such things.

"Oh," she exclaimed. "What is it? Are you sure I will like it?"

"I know it!" exclaimed Winkleton. "This time I have done the right thing. Wait!"

They entered the house.

Winkleton preceded her, and stood dramatically in the door of the reception-room.

"Prepare yourself," he cried proudly.

Mrs. Winkleton entered, gave one look, and burst into tears. "I shall never forgive you for this!" she sobbed.

Her dumfounded husband, wholly at a loss, gazed at her in amazement.

"Never forgive me!" he repeated. "Why, isn't this just the way you wanted it?"

Mrs. Winkleton, partially recovering, looked at him, in her eyes a whole world of reproach.

"Yes," she said, "of course it is. Why shouldn't it be? But you've cheated me out of it! You horrid, mean old thing, don't you know that for months I've just looked forward to the pleasure of ordering all those things myself?"

TOM MASSON



EASY

MISS SANDFORD—Yes, Mr. Fielder, I will be yours on one condition.

FIELDER—Oh, that's all right. I entered Harvard with six.



THE TRUTHFUL SPIRIT

"WELL," snapped Saint Peter, "what have you to say for yourself?"

"I am not a good man," replied the applicant; "but I didn't go about making apologies for myself on earth, and I don't intend to begin now."

And he got in.



UNWILLING TO BE A MARTYR

"DO you believe in tipping waiters?"

"No, but I have an aversion to going hungry."

A FINAL ACCORD

By W. J. Henderson

HERR DOVITZENIA sighed and stroked his mustache softly with a delicate Paderewski touch. He had just finished playing the C sharp minor prelude of Chopin, the one which Niecks thought was so much like an improvisation and which Huneker declared was not for the multitude. It had a charm inexpressible for Dovitzenia. Perhaps he was captivated by the beautiful modulation from C sharp minor to D flat and back again. He could have told, but he would not. What was the use? The beautiful women who always flocked undulatory and ruffling at the receptions of Mrs. Healy Horner, matron-in-general to musical genius, stood about him four deep and breathed incense upon him. So he sighed and patiently stroked his mustache, waiting for the end. Then he would revenge himself by playing one of Liszt's "Études Transcendantes."

"Herr Dovitzenia," murmured Florence Furbish, the pianiste from across the river, "your technic is amazing."

"Yes? You are so amiable. Thank you."

"Herr Dovitzenia," said Mrs. Folsomby Flinn, the amateur from the Bronx, "if I could play like that I would give ten years of my life."

"I gave more than that," responded Dovitzenia sententiously.

"Oh, divinity of imperial sound! Sweet accords of unutterable thoughts! They set my being to new harmonies."

It was Olive Madison, whom Dovitzenia could not understand. Olive Madison was tall and willowy and looked much like one of those girls that all good magazine artists draw

when they wish to idealize society. Her eyes were a soft gray and they seemed to peer beyond the prose deeds of today and to fix themselves on the poetry of the distant future. Dovitzenia had seen her first at a reception in a home of Sunday paper culture, piano arrangements of Wagner and framed etchings. Then she began to go to his recitals. She went to all of them and sat where she could look up into his face with the poetry-of-the-future gray eyes.

At first it troubled Dovitzenia; but presently he observed that she never carried any scores and seemed to be totally oblivious of his dropped notes. Then he began to like it. He studied her face, which was worth studying. He said to himself that it was a song without words, which was untrue, for she talked often and copiously, with a fine outpour of adjectives. Now Dovitzenia was gazing down into the gray eye of the far distant prospect while a strange little thrill, such as he had never before felt, glowed softly along his spine.

"Is it that I am troubled with a cold, or have I caught a temperament?" he asked himself. Then he answered Olive Madison.

"You enjoyed the prelude, yes? I am enraptured."

He continued gently to stroke the mustache and to look far away.

"Enjoy!" she exclaimed. "It was more than joy—it was transport. I shall write of it later."

It was this which troubled him. Miss Madison was a poet. She would write about his playing in sonnets and ballades and even in triolets. He did

not know what she meant, and the triplets were very hard to endure. The sonnets he bore with some fortitude, for they plainly meant nothing at all, so far as he could see; but the triplets were so little and so innocent-looking that they actually appeared to be truthful, yet he could make nothing of them, either. And he knew English well enough to know that Miss Madison was unique in her rhymes. She was even Gilbertian at times, but Dovitzenia did not know that.

"You will write, yes? It will be adorable!"

He did not seem to be much moved, but she was shaken with a storm of emotion when he said her poem would be adorable. The gray eyes stopped peering into the future and came back to the present with sudden rich sunny fires in them. Then the lids fell over them, like the curtain descending on the flaming of Walhalla in the last act of "Götterdämmerung."

The whole room was watching them. Florence Furbish, the pianiste from across the river, thought that Miss Madison's conduct was altogether too clever in its technic. Mrs. Folsomby Flinn, the Bronx amateur, declared to her secret self that the artful minx was endeavoring to ensnare the greatest pianist of the age, who should live for his art alone. Mrs. Folsomby Flinn was thirty-seven and had a husband in the wholesale grocery business. As the women fell back gradually and left the two standing together, Carol Browne, the little musical critic, who had learned two words of Polish on purpose to speak them to a famous prima donna, and was now awaiting his opportunity to say them to the pianist, murmured to Marie Whitaker, the female 'cellist, who was suffering from housemaid's knee and could not take any engagements:

"Isn't it a pity that young woman doesn't play a fiddle or a flute or something, so that she could appear at his concerts? They look well together, don't you think?"

"If she played anything, it would be a cornet," snapped Miss Whit-

taker, who would have loved dearly to play the Saint-Saëns sonata with Dovitzenia.

"Yes," sighed Olive Madison, "I shall write. I do not know what it will be, but I shall strive to put into mere words the emotions which you pour through that prelude. You express the universal and eternal overthought."

Dovitzenia stroked his mustache. He had been brought up on Hanslick and denied the power of music to express emotion. To him it was nothing but beautiful arabesques of sound. It meant nothing. But his technic was indeed wonderful and his tone was so melting.

When he met Olive again it was in the artist's room after one of his recitals. He had played a wonderful program and had added two Liszt fantasies and the Rubinstein C major étude as encore numbers. The women had crowded down to the stage and had stood worshipping his de-vitalized wrists as they rapped out the staccati of the Russian's German music. He had felt nothing in that music but the cleverness of its suitability to the piano. Probably Rubinstein himself felt nothing more. Olive, who had not crowded with the other women, but had stood in a medieval pose in a side aisle, whither she had retreated from her front seat in order to be alone with her dreams, had perceived vast vistas of vanishing mysteries in the étude. She came now to Dovitzenia and proffered him a slip of paper. Well he knew what he was to expect. He shuddered almost imperceptibly as he took it.

"You need not read it now," she said. "When you are alone in your study smell white rose, strike the chord of A flat major, and then read it. I wrote it yesterday, but today I perceived that the thought was prophetic. It is the mighty C major étude of Rubinstein played by the mightier Dovitzenia."

Then she slipped away in the writhing mass of adulators.

When Dovitzenia was alone at home

he took the piece of paper from his pocket and read this:

Snow, steppes, and the step of the hound!
 Shadows of steeds and of riders that sit to
 the saddle;
 Strokes of the arrow that shiver and make
 no sound,
 Swash of the swirling canoe and the paddle.
 Dark as the tremor of hate and the liquor of
 love,
 Bare as the brow of a hill that is ever in
 winter,
 Halcyon colors of yore and cerulean temples
 above,
 Master and molder of men, superlative
 tinter,
 Thine is the victory, bought with our breath,
 Striker of tones ever mellow and fluty,
 Magic divine of dear love and of death
 Above and below in the halo of beauty.

Dovitzenia shook his head, stroked his mustache and sighed.

"Is it that I love her? Yes?" he reflected. "It must be that. Something affects me. It must be temperament, and temperament is akin to love."

The next day he went to call on Olive. She had asked him several times to do so, but he had always found some way to avoid it. Now he went anxiously. She was at home, and there were no other visitors. She took care that there should be none. She was in an ecstasy.

"Did you read it?" she asked.

"Yes," he answered. "For that I read it I have come here. It sent me."

Olive trembled. She hardly knew what to say to him.

"Is it that you have affected me strangely, Miss Madison? Yes? I am desolate for words to tell you. You do not know my language. I know yours little. Still, I can say I love you. Is it that this troubles me? Yes? So I tell you."

Olive could not speak.

"Is it that you are angered?" he asked.

"Oh, no!" she responded, with a sudden upward flash of her wonderful gray eyes.

Dovitzenia leaned forward and took her hand.

"Then we are to be husband and wife? Yes?"

"Oh, Jan, to be the wife of such a great genius!"

And then she fairly fell upon his neck. He kissed her ardently, for he had some of that kind of temperament. Presently he said to her:

"After we are married you shall teach me to understand your beautiful verses."

Olive stared with a frightened look in her gray eyes.

"But you understand them now, do you not?" she said.

"No, it is that your muse is too subtle. I follow not her furthest flight. You must teach me."

Olive gazed at him helplessly, her hands falling limp in her lap. She turned pale and trembled.

"What is it, my angel?" he asked.

"My hour of punishment is here," she said.

"Punishment? Why punishment for you, fairest?"

"Oh, Jan, I must confess! I, too, do not know what my poems mean!"

He looked at her as if he thought she had taken leave of her senses.

"You do not know? And I do not know. How shall they be explained to me?"

"They cannot be explained. They never meant anything. They are there, they are there!"

The girl's voice rose to a kind of sob.

"They stand between us," she cried, "the shrieking evidences of my duplicity! They are like the ghosts in 'Macbeth.' They will not down!"

"Calm yourself, angel of distraction," said Dovitzenia, taking her hand in his. "Why shall we not let these poems stand unexplained, like the beautiful riddles of the Sphinx?"

"No, no!" she wailed; "I cannot do that. They would haunt me."

"Then you shall tell me why you wrote them."

She covered her face with her hands as she confessed.

"All the women rhapsodize about your music, Jan. Their talk seemed to me so silly, so prosaic. I tried to write in my verses something that would seem to you to—to—to mean

just what your music seemed to mean—I mean ought to have seemed to mean—to me.”

Dovitzenia caught her in his arms and kissed her passionately.

“Angel of my soul!” he exclaimed rapturously. “And you could not find any meaning in it?”

“No,” she sobbed.

“We shall be so happy,” he said.

“Oh, Jan, you are so forgiving!”

“I have nothing to forgive, soul of my soul. I, too, do not know what my music means, and I am rejoiced to

believe that it does not mean anything.”

“Oh, Jan,” she murmured, “then we are both esthetic impostors!”

“Is it not so?” he replied cheerfully. “Yes, it is true. We shall be most happy. We shall live in perfect accord, like a major third.”

And so they were married. And Dovitzenia continued to hypnotize the women, while Olive kept his fingers in repair and never went to bed till she had audited the box-office returns with a magnifying-glass.



HE KNEW WHAT SHE WAS LEADING UP TO

CLARA—Are you a fatalist?

CALLER—Yes, but don't make a Welsh rabbit.



EXPERT

REGGIE—Have you your motor perfectly under control?

BERTIE—When I take a girl out into the country for dinner I can always break it down in front of a cheap table d'hôte place.



THE NOVEL READER

“DON'T you remember the plot?”

“Not very well. Maybe I skipped the plot.”



WIFE—I am having all my dinner frocks made décolleté.

PERFECTBRUTE—Then no one will accuse us of locking the family skeleton in the closet.